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THE

SIDNEY

CENTENNIAL JUBILEE

—AT—

SIDNEY PLAINS, DELAWARE CO., N. Y.,

JUNE 13, 1872.

[Compiled by Henry Wade Rogers.]

ANN ARBOR:

DR. CHASE'S STEAM PRINTING HOUSE.

1875.

W. M. F. Russell

at
3-15-1923

PREFACE.

An apology is due to many of those who took part in the exercises which this little volume is intended to perpetuate, for what would seem to be an unwarrantable delay in its publication. Without attempting an enumeration of the reasons for the delay, or spending any considerable time in manufacturing unsatisfactory ones, it will be as well to say that there is little excuse for it. This makes an apology a little awkward, and, perhaps, the least said the better.

Mr. Sherman, the Chairman of the Home Committee, promptly prepared the details (there being no professional reporter,) but many of the speeches were not furnished for a long time after. On the whole it may be as well to lay the principal blame at the door of the publisher, who is a good natured man and will not be likely to object to that disposition of a vexed question.

DECEMBER, 1875.

[Henry Wade] R. Rogers]

424707

PROCEEDINGS

PRIOR TO THE CELEBRATION.

Who is entitled to the honor of first suggesting the propriety of holding a Centennial Celebration at Sidney, as the oldest settlement in the upper valley of the Susquehanna, is not certainly known ; but it is believed that Bennett Woodruff, Esq., of Unadilla, a gentleman familiar with our early history, first suggested it. This was several months prior to June, 1872, the one hundredth anniversary of the settlement. This suggestion was made to Milton Johnston, Esq., a lineal descendant of Dominie Johnston, the pioneer ; and he, perhaps, was more instrumental than any other one person in calling attention to the fact, that as a community we were about to pass the first century of our existence. About this time sundry articles in our local papers were published, calling the attention of the people to the historical fact ; and very soon sufficient interest was manifested to warrant the calling of a public meeting. This meeting was held in the lecture room of the Congregational church, and was well attended by those who had a direct and personal interest in the early settlement of the place. The feeling manifested was very strong that this opportunity must not pass without making an effort to call home our "wandering ones" to celebrate with us, when the time should come, the one hundredth anniversary of our settlement.

It was, however, urged by *some*, that as a community, we were not large enough, and had not wealth and experience sufficient to warrant an undertaking of such magnitude ; that our village accommodations were too small, and that it would hardly be wise to undertake what we could hardly expect to carry out to a satisfactory conclusion.

Happily this feeling did not very largely prevail ; and it was ordered by the meeting, that a committee should be appointed to correspond with those who had gone out from us, and whose residence was known, and ascertain as far as possible their feelings in regard to the enterprise, and whether or not many would be inclined to return to the scenes of their "boyhood days," and join with us in the undertaking. The meeting appointed as such committee, John Baxter, Milton Johnston, and Ira E. Sherman, and the result of this correspondence was to be reported to an adjourned meeting.

At an adjourned meeting held some little time after, the correspondence that had been elicited, was submitted ; and it is to be regretted that this correspondence, in part at least, cannot be given, as evidencing the feeling, and anxiety even, with which those who were addressed expressed themselves in regard to a Centennial Celebration. In no instance was the matter treated lightly ; but all seemed desirous to be numbered among those, who were disposed to honor the memory of our fathers. The names of only a few of these can now be recalled, whose interest from the outset was strong, and whose appeals to us at home were potent in urging on all needful preparation. Among those, I cannot forbear to mention such names as Henry W. Rogers, David McMaster, Benjamin and Witter Baxter.

This correspondence completely removed all doubts and hesitation ; and at this meeting it was resolved to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of the settlement of Sidney ; and as the first settlement in the valley was made here, it was further resolved to invite our sister towns along the line of the Susquehanna, from Binghamton to Cooperstown, to unite with us in the celebration.

At this meeting a committee of arrangements was appointed, to attend to the business of raising funds, issuing circulars of invitation, &c. The following are the names of the committee :

Messrs. IRA E. SHERMAN, JOHN BAXTER, MILTON JOHNSTON.	Messrs. J. J. ROGERS, A. HARDY, T. G. SMITH, and ABNER JOHNSTON.
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Ira E. Sherman was chosen Chairman ; A. Hardy, Secretary ; and G. Smith, Treasurer.

It was resolved at this meeting that the committee be instructed to invite Judge David McMaster, of Bath, to act as our Historian ; Benj. L. Baxter, of Tecumseh, Michigan, as Poet ; and Henry W. Rogers, of Ann Arbor, formerly of Buffalo, as Orator ; and further, that Rev. James H. Johnston, of Crawfordsville, Indiana, be invited to preach the Historical Sermon in the evening. Accordingly, invitations were sent to these gentlemen, requesting their acceptance of such appointments ; and favorable answers were received from all, except the Rev. James H. Johnston, who felt compelled to decline on account of feeble health and advanced age. Rev. A. McMaster was substituted in place of Mr. Johnston ; but this change was made too late to be announced in the circular of invitation.

Accordingly, the following circular was issued and sent to all whose names and address could be ascertained, who formerly were residents of Sidney. Prior to the issuing of the circular, Milton Johnston, Esq., resigned his place as a member of the committee, and Martin B. Luther, Esq., was appointed in his place :

CIRCULAR.

1772.

1872.

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION!

—o—

M.

*You are respectfully
invited to visit the Susquehanna Valley, and attend the*

First Centennial Celebration

*of its settlement, to be held at SIDNEY PLAINS, June 13th, 1872.
Exercises to commence at 10 o'clock A. M.*

Historian.

HON. DAVID McMASTER, Bath, Steuben County, New York.

Poet.

HON. BENJAMIN L. BAXTER, Tecumseh, Michigan.

Orator.

HON. HENRY W. ROGERS, Ann Arbor, Mich.

Historical Sermon.

REV. JAMES H. JOHNSTON, of Ind.

It is proposed to make this one of the most interesting celebrations ever held in the valley. Tents will be erected, and everything done to make the occasion pleasant and entertaining. Singing by a full choir, dressed in Old Time Costume.

A full programme of exercises will be issued hereafter.

Ira E. Sherman,	{	Committee
John Baxter,		
M. B. Luther,	{	of
A. Hardy,		
J. J. Rogers,	{	Arrangements.
Abner Johnston,		
T. G. Smith.		

Many responses were received by the committee to these invitations, some of which have been preserved for publication, on account of their historical and social interest.

As the time drew near for the celebration, many questions arose of no little embarrassment to those who were interested in its success. Large accommodations were necessary, to provide for our expected guests, and in a small country village these are by no means easily found. In some way shelter must be provided from sun and storm, and but for our agricultural friends, this would have proved an embarrassing question to the last. The "Susquehanna Agricultural Society" and the "Delaware Agricultural Society," very generously tendered to the committee the use of their tents; and these, being large and commodious, made it possible to provide for the speaking and the dinner on a scale large enough to warrant reasonable success.

The care of the tents, their erection, seating and arranging, was entrusted to Messrs. S. R. Beckwith, Joseph Miles and James Parsons. This was a burthensome duty to perform, requiring much time and care to do safely and well; but the committee had every reason to be satisfied with the way in which the duty was performed, Messrs. A. M. Turner and Albert King had charge of the decorations, and displayed great taste and skill in this department for the little time and material afforded them to carry out their plans.

The dinner was under the charge of Messrs. Henry A. Foster, Milo Phelps and George A. King, assisted by the ladies of the place; and that this duty was performed to the satisfaction and pride of all interested, is the highest commendation that can be offered. To those ladies whose duties were so burthensome, and who did so cheerfully and well the task imposed upon them, we can only say, that our guests gave to them the palm, of providing more and better fare than many larger places would have deemed possible. No citizen but had reason to be proud of the ladies of Sidney for their interest and skill in planning, gathering, and providing for a dinner on a scale so large, that it seemed almost an impossibility to accomplish it, even moderately well.

THE CELEBRATION.

For many days prior to Thursday, June 13th, the weather had been unfavorable for an out-door celebration ; but on the morning of that day the clouds lifted, giving promise of a serene June day—such a day as makes life out of doors at once pleasant and enjoyable. The ground had been thoroughly soaked by the rains of the preceding days ; but under the influence of a brisk west wind, by ten o'clock, little inconvenience was suffered by those, who were compelled to thread the streets on foot.

Early in the day the people began to gather, a few through idle curiosity, but very largely through real interest in the proceedings about to take place ; and as the different trains on the New York and Oswego Midland and Albany and Susquehanna Railroads, including extra trains that those Roads had generously provided for the special accommodation of those who could not reach Sidney in time on the regular trains, began to arrive, those who had before doubted the success of the celebration, were convinced that this was indeed to be the greatest gathering that had ever been seen in this part of the valley. The extra train from Walton on the "Midland" was literally loaded down ; even the tops of the cars were covered by those, who were anxious to be present at this, the first centennial celebration in the upper valley of the Susquehanna.

An interesting feature of this gathering was the great number of aged people,—some of these were indeed venerable, on account of their advanced age. One in his hundredth year, and several past ninety. The bent and withered forms of so many of these white-haired pilgrims, amid the life and buoyancy of middle age and youth, was a scene, such as is seldom witnessed

in the ordinary gatherings of life ; and lent an interest to thoughtful observance, not easily overlooked or soon forgotten.

At 10:30 the Marshal of the day, Lieut. CHARLES S. BRADFORD, and his *assistants*, proceeded to carry out the programme of arrangements, and the procession was formed in the following order :

Band of the 103d Reg. from Norwich,
Committee of Arrangements,
Persons over 70 years of age,
Invited Guests,
Descendants of the early settlers,
Citizens of Sidney and adjoining towns.

After marching through the principal streets of the village the procession turned towards the grounds chosen for the celebration. This was on the farm, formerly owned by Ezra Clarke, and near what was known as the " Indian Knoll," on the south bank of the Susquehanna, and but a short distance above the mouth of the Unadilla River. Here were erected two large tents—one provided with seats and a platform ; the other with tables for the dinner. The speakers' platform was tastefully festooned with flags ; and over the platform were the following words, formed with evergreens on a white background :

"One hundred years."

"God our Strength."

On the speakers' desk lay a rough looking grooved stone—the first mill-stone used for grinding in this part of the country. The tent was soon filled to its utmost capacity, whilst outside in every available place for seeing or hearing were grouped those who could not be seated inside. As soon as sufficient order was obtained, the chairman of the Committee of Arrangements, the Hon. IRA E. SHERMAN, pronounced the following

ADDRESS OF WELCOME.

As chairman of the Committee of Arrangements it becomes my pleasant duty to extend to you, who are gathered here, *our* greeting on this interesting occasion. With what more fitting words can I express the feelings of those I represent, than in this simple, old-time language?—Friends, one and all! We are

glad—heartily glad to see you. Not with *words* alone would we welcome you, but with such manifestations of regard, as we are capable of giving. Need I say, that our *hearts* are in this welcome? You come to celebrate with us an event, the parallel to which has nowhere been found in all our previous history. To-day we close up the first one hundred years of our existence as a community. When first we thought and talked of the propriety of celebrating this centennial day, we little dreamed that *your* response to our invitation would be as hearty and cheering as we find it to-day. In all of our correspondence with those whose early lives were spent amid these scenes, we have found, not only encouragement and cheer, but a willingness to *do*, to add to the interest of this occasion, that has been far beyond our expectations. Through these helps from small beginnings, has this celebration grown, until now I find myself in the midst of a large assemblage of people, surrounded by men distinguished in nearly all the walks of life, and whose words will both interest and instruct us all. To those of you who have gone out from us in the years gone by, and now return to celebrate with us this first centennial day, we have not words to express the feelings that stir our hearts in this greeting. Our hills and valleys—our fields and streets, our hearths and homes are *yours* to-day. Do *with* them and *in* them, as your hearts may prompt, and we will rejoice with you in all that shall stir the heart with gratitude and praise—in all that shall awaken those dear old memories of the past, without which, our lives are but as a barren waste, and the present a drudging round of daily toil. To these memories let this day be fully consecrated.

One hundred years of our history has been told. To us, these years seem long. Such mighty changes have taken place that we can hardly realize, that almost within the life of one man, now present with us, Mr. St. John, have these things been done. One human life covering almost our entire history; and that the history of this valley; now thick with villages of thrift, and full of the happy homes of those, who glory in their fertile acres, reclaimed during these years from the dominion of a mighty forest;

and through all which, as the mightiest agent of civilized life, now glides the iron horse, the bearer of our burthens to the marts of trade—a carrier that, with *our* missions of love and affection, tarries not, nor tires, until his journey is accomplished. The men who have made these things possible, these are they whose names it is our duty to inscribe upon our roll of honor, and send them down the ages, as the founders of a community happy, prosperous and free. Never before, have I looked upon such a scene as this,—so many whitened locks—so many faces seamed and scarred by time—so many forms bent and withered by age. Tenderly and lovingly do we extend to you our greeting; nor need we say that *you* are more than welcome! It is our *joy*, our *privilege* to greet you here; for ye are indeed living epistles of the history of the past,—that history which to-day we celebrate.

Once more, and to *all* who are gathered here, in behalf of the citizens of Sidney Plains, I extend a cordial welcome; trusting that this day will prove of interest and joy to all, and that each of us may be strengthened in our love and esteem for those, the benefit of whose lives we are reaping year by year; and when another century shall roll away, may *we too* be remembered with those who have gone before, as benefactors of our race.

Rev. M. E. DUNHAM, of Whitestown, N. Y., made the following response to the “Address of Welcome”:

REV. M. E. DUNHAM'S RESPONSE.

Gentlemen of the Committee and Citizens of Sidney Plains:

In response to your kind invitation, we are gathered here to-day, coming from the north and the south, the east and the west to greet you on this festival occasion. We have already felt the warm grasp of your hands as your lips bid us a hearty welcome to the spot where our ancestors have lived and labored and died, and where some of us played in childhood, and all of us have lingered in imagination; and now we are assembled for the more especial object which has called us together. And first, permit us to congratulate you on the auspicious omens which smile upon the opening of your exercises this day. The heavens,

which have been frowning with gathered clouds and bountiful showers, have cleared away at the dawning of this morning, and the sun shines as brightly and benignly as though its golden rays were woven out of the approving smiles of our departed ancestors. We gladly accept this token of approval, as we proceed to do honor to the memory of the men who first planted the standard of civilization in this beautiful valley. It is well to remember the past, and to recall the toil, deprivation and self-sacrifice of those who pushed forward into the wilderness to provide happy homes for their descendants. It was no slight test of bravery to face the hostility and defy the treachery of the wily savage of the forest, as the noble Johnston, who first built a house on this historic spot fully proved by his own personal experience. It was no small expenditure of physical strength and hardly endurance which cleared away the sturdy forest and brought these Plains into cultivated fields, smiling with bountiful harvests. And yet to those early pioneers it was a labor of love, as they looked forward to the time when their descendants, reaping the fruit of their toil, dwelling amid plenty, with all the comforts and many of the luxuries of life, should rise up and call them blessed. We are here to day to recognize, and so far as may be, repay this debt of gratitude. We do call them blessed, while our grateful hearts are filled with thanksgiving.

If there be any one thing which characterizes the American people more than another, it is an intense and absorbing interest in the present. Engaged in their merchandise, their farming, their mechanical pursuits, their strife after wealth, they find little time for reminiscences, and small space for thoughts of the past. They pause not to worship dead heroes, twine few wreaths for departed greatness, and bestow their chief admiration upon the living winners in life's great battle. In many respects this is well; and yet the debt of gratitude we owe to those who have lived and labored for our good, should be neither forgotten nor left unpaid. We are what we are, largely owing to what they did for us in making preparations for the full and free exercise of our activities. We have been sowing and reaping in fields which their hands fitted for cultivation; and, in many ways, we are en-

joying blessings which have come to us as the results of their toil and self-sacrifice. It is befitting, therefore, that our thoughts to-day should recount their names and deeds; our lips shall speak their praise, and our hearts pour forth a full tide of grateful remembrance.

We look back to an hundred years ago! A solitary white man, with the Olive Branch of the Gospel of Christ in his hand, and the Charity of that Gospel in his heart, plants himself first, and after a time, his family, here in a forest full of savages and wild beasts. The hundred years have passed, and lo! what a crowd of happy hearts gather here, surrounded by fertile fields, which are covered with grains and grasses, and herds, and dotted with homes pleasant, peaceful, and luxurious;—a goodly company of grateful descendants. And, may we not fancy there are more assembled here to-day than we can see with our mortal eye? The veil is so thin which separates the living from the dead—the seen from the unseen—that we may well believe there are eyes looking in upon us, which are radiant with the light of immortality, and hearts beating in sympathy with us, whose pulses are too delicate for our dull materiality to recognize. They are with us and of us, though their hands are too thin for our friendly grasp, and their language too spiritualized for our friendly greeting. We are not separated, perhaps, from the departed so far as we have been accustomed to believe. The army of human life is marching on in a solid phalanx, with unbroken column, the front ranks having passed through the mists of death, out of sight, leaving that portion of the column which is passing the point called to-day, alone visible. As one advances another immediately takes the place thus made vacant; and so the activities and industries of life know no cessation. Where the hammer of enterprise falls from one hand, another is ready to pick it up. The work goes unceasingly on. Our forefathers lived and labored for our good, and we have taken up the work just where they left it. They have passed on to the land unseen, and we are closely following them. Soon our part will be done, and our places vacated. We shall leave the ledger unbalanced on the

counter, the hammer idle on the anvil of life, the plough still in the furrow, and the harvest ungathered. Others will fill our places in the public marts of trade, occupy our seats by the fireside, and stretch themselves upon our couches. Let us see to it that they have abundant reason to bless God that He permitted us to live and labor for their good.

And now permit us to congratulate you upon the evidences of material prosperity which we see around us. The spirit of the age has caught you—or you have caught it—and you are marching nobly on in the great enterprises of the day. The hills no longer shut you in from the great thoroughfares of traffic and of travel, for the iron bands cross each other in the very heart of your valley, and the iron horse brings its load of merchandise to your very doors. Business is quickening its pulse of activity, trade is multiplying its commodities of exchange, and thrift and enterprise rule the spirit of the hour. We feel a pride in your success and rejoice in your prospects; for, though drifting away on the tide of adventure, we have located our homes in other valleys and upon other hillsides; still, we have lost none of our interest in the home of our childhood and the dwelling place of our fathers. May your village spread its pleasant houses and busy stores and thrifty shops over these plains until your citizens shall be numbered by thousands where they now count only hundreds.

We congratulate you upon the success of this occasion. Your unsparing efforts have won a triumphant success. Never did children, returning from their wanderings back to the parental roof, meet a more hearty welcome, or find more ample provisions made for their comfort than you have prepared for us today. We thank you for this reception, and feel our hearts knit more closely to yours by the expression of this hour. "It is good for us to be here," for here we learn that there are some things more valuable than gold and silver; and that among these is the friendship of tried and true hearts. It is well to learn this, for we are members of one family, and should cultivate the bonds of brotherhood. Our hearts should be knit together, and

our sympathy for each other should be deep and strong. Nor is anything better calculated to secure these ends than scenes like this; and so we come together to join hands afresh and to unite hearts anew. With gladness, therefore, we accept your generous welcome, and participate in this celebration of a century ended. Together let us do honor to a hundred years ago!

At the close of Mr. Dunham's address, A. HARDY, Esq., announced the following gentlemen as the officers of the day:

President.—Henry W. Rogers.

Vice-Presidents—Col. Robert Hughston and S. L. Wattles, Esq., of Sidney; Hon. Joseph Bush and Col. Richard Juliand, of Bainbridge; Col. Samuel North, N. Hughston, Esq. and Dr. E. Odell, of Unadilla; S. R. Follett, Esq., and Hon. Ebenezer Blakeley, of Otego; Hon. W. W. Snow, E. R. Ford, Esq., and Dr. Meigs Case, of Oneonta; D. A. Carpenter, and H. R. Casswell, Esquires, of Afton; W. L. Mudge, and Edwin Northrop, Esquires, of Colesville; Hon. Ransom Balcom, Hon. G. Edwards, and Cyrus Strong, Esq., of Binghamton; Z. Curtis, and A. Miller, Esquires, of Guilford; Hon. John H. Edgerton, of Franklin; Hon. A. Bolt, of Masonville; Nelson Hyde, and Isaac S. Newton, Esquires, of Norwich; Hon. Stephen B. Leonard, of Owego.

On taking the chair, Mr. ROGERS, who was born in the Valley, made the following address:

THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

Sons and Daughters of the Pioneers:

I am deeply impressed by these surroundings—and still more to stand in this presence as your presiding officer, to guide and in some measure to direct the movements and proceedings of this vast assemblage! How could it well be otherwise? Gathered from many parts of our widely extended country, here we stand, the living among the dead, on an occasion of more interest and importance than any other that has preceded it in the history of this valley. Like hundreds of others who have wandered from the old home, but much longer away than most of them, I come to you from a distant State and after an absence of

nearly one-half of the century, to do homage to the memory of the brave men and women who first developed and cultivated these fertile acres; and laid the foundations of society in trial and suffering, in privation and want, consecrating it to virtuous industry, enterprise and thrift, and more than all, to the precepts and observances of our Holy Religion. The events of the past, which memory so vividly recalls,—the associations and thoughts of this hour are almost too deep and absorbing for intelligible utterance. Where are the Pioneers, with whose stalwart frames and manly forms we were familiar in our infancy and childhood? Where are the early settlers, the sons of toil, but men of the lion heart, strong in mind and will, the Johnstons, the Smiths, the Averys, the Baxters, the Farnhams, the Bradleys, the Redfields, the Hoveys, the Dudgeons, the Bixbys,, and scores of others who dignified labor, and whom I then held as we all do their memory now, in grateful veneration? Dead. alas! all are dead ! yet not forgotten,—their works have followed them ; and the good they did in their day and generation, still lives. Many of you as well as myself, during the years that have intervened between youth and advanced age, have sought other fields for the exercise of such powers as God has given us, and we have made for ourselves other homes where love and affection dwell,—and yet it seems to me *now*, that there is no place on this earth so sacred, so filled with all the attractions, all the lovable things and hallowed associations that allure while they impress, as our childhood home. This was the theatre of our childish and innocent sports. Here we first learned to play and to work—to read, to write and to cypher. Here, under the pious guidance of Christian Mothers, our infant minds received their first impressions of “ the beautiful and the good.” Here we were first instructed in the laws of the two tables—laws which lie at the foundation of religious civilization and high culture,—and here too, is the sacred spot,

“ Where my eyes first opened to the sweet and pleasant light,
Where I learned the poems of the morning and the night,
Where baptismal waters on my infant forehead fell,
And where I heard the holy precepts I remember now so well.”

With most of us it is the final resting place of our beloved dead,

—with whom are associated precious, sacred and endearing memories. In contemplating such a place, hallowed by so much that is attractive and impressive in age as well as in childhood, we can but feel that it is not only the home of our youth, but in some sense that of our old age also. Surely this is a festive day —an occasion for congratulations and joy, and, if we will, for making merry, and yet in spite of ourselves, reflections of a sober, sombre hue, will obtrude upon our thoughts and I think may not unreasonably be set down to the account of rational contemplation, if not of positive enjoyment. However this may be, believing as I do that they are in strict harmony with the sensibilities of many if not most of those who hear me, I do not feel called upon to apologize for giving expression to them. And we may indulge the hope that they will hallow the occasion and lend grace and gravity to this imposing ceremonial.

At the close of the President's address, prayer was offered by the Rev. J. B. MORSE. The Norwich Glee Club, consisting of Messrs. BABCOCK, CAREY, LATHAM and BROWN, then sang the following piece, entitled—

“A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.”

Where are the birds that sweetly sang
A hundred years ago?
The flowers that all in beauty sprang
A hundred years ago?
The lips that smiled, the eyes that wild
In flashes shone, bright eyes upon.
O where, O where are lips and eyes,
The maiden's smile, the lovers' sighs,
That were so long ago,
That were so long ago,
Where, O where, that were so long ago?

Where are the graves where dead men slept,
A hundred years ago?
Who, while they lived, did oft times weep,
A hundred years ago.
By other men, they knew not then,
Their lands are tilled, their homes are filled,
Yet nature then was just as gay,
And bright the sun shone as to-day
A hundred years ago,
A hundred years ago,
Where, O where, a hundred years ago?

We all within our graves shall sleep,
 A hundred years to come,
 No living soul for us shall weep
 A hundred years to come,
 But other men our lands will till
 And others, then, our streets will fill,
 While other birds will sing as gay.
 As bright the sunshine as to-day
 A hundred years to come,
 A hundred years to come.
 Where? Where? Where? a hundred years to come?

The skill and taste of the singers in rendering the sentiment, as well as the music of this song, was very fine, and left an impression on those who heard it not soon to be forgotten. The President announced as next in order "a Historical Sketch, prepared by the appointed Historian, a son of Capt. David McMaster, one of the first settlers, and a beloved and honored citizen of this valley seventy years ago, and for long years thereafter, and the great-grandson of Rev. William Johnston, the Pioneer. This important duty," continued the President, "I am only too glad to assure you, could hardly have been entrusted to fitter, certainly not to abler hands. Allow me to introduce to you our Historian, Judge DAVID McMaster, of Bath, New York":

HISTORICAL ADDRESS.

Mr. President—Ladies and Gentlemen :

Assembled, as we are, to do honor by a festive celebration, to the memory of the pioneer settlers of the Susquehanna Valley, almost our first thought is one of sadness, that so many of our friends, whom we should have rejoiced to have met here to-day, are not here. We are

"Parted and sundered by mountain and wave,
 And some in the cold, silent womb of the grave."

I pass into yonder enclosure, and read on the pale marble the names of more persons whom I once knew, than there are persons present whom I know to-day. I walk through the long street in this village, where once every face was familiar, unrecognized, and meeting only strangers; save here and there a gray-haired old man, in whom I perceive a strange resemblance to the friend of my youth.

Events which, in their passing, occupy and interest us most, soon pass out of mind and are forgotten. The effacing hand of time passes over and obliterates the realities of to-day. History and memory alone can bring back to us the realities of yesterday. Hark ! To-day our century clock strikes one. It is well for us to step aside, and let the day with its freight of universal humanity sweep by ; while for a few hours we cease from the turmoil of politics and the cares of every day life, to call back the years long gone, and gather up the memories of men and events before they are lost in forgetfulness ; and more than all to cherish and cultivate in our own hearts the memory of those virtues, the patriotism, the courage, the perseverance, the piety, for which our ancestors were distinguished, and to which we, their descendants, are in a great measure indebted for the prosperity which we enjoy.

But, before entering upon the task which you have assigned me, allow me to express the hope, that no one has come here to-day expecting, in the brief hour allotted to me, a history of the Susquehanna Valley, its settlement and occupation. The preparation of the few pages which I propose to read to you, has satisfied me, that to give shape and finish, and the certainty of truth to unwritten history, requires qualifications to which I can make no pretension. The proper execution of such a work can only be performed by some diligent, pains-taking student, who will visit and make himself familiar with every locality ; and who, with no other care, and with no inducement to slight or hurry his work, shall consult every available source of information, and embody the result in an ample volume.

It has therefore seemed to me, that I shall best contribute to the design of this gathering of the citizens of the Susquehanna Valley, by confining my discourse to the personal history of a few representative men, together with some events of general interest with which they were connected ; avoiding, as much as possible, detail of facts already published. And, as the place at which we are assembled to-day, is the point at which, it is believed, the first settlement in the Susquehanna Valley, in this State, commenced ; the interest of this occasion naturally cen-

ters here. And also for the reason that many of the early settlers of this place were personally known to me, it has seemed easier for me to gather items of their personal history, than to have obtained similar materials among strangers. I do not doubt that equal interest attaches to other places and to others of the early settlers. But an attempt to go over the entire field would have resulted in nothing more interesting than a mere rehearsal of names and dates.

One hundred years have elapsed since Rev. William Johnston, accompanied by his son, the late Col. Witter Johnston, then nineteen years of age, first came to this place. The father died in 1783, and there is probably no person now living who ever saw and conversed with him. Col. Witter Johnston died in October, 1839, at the age of 86 years, having actually resided more than sixty years upon the premises selected by his father and himself as the future home of the family. Members of Col. Witter Johnston's family continue to reside here, who are not only familiar with facts as related by the first settlers themselves, and well understood in the family, but whose memory goes back almost to the commencement of this century.

So that although the period of three generations as commonly computed has passed since the time from which we date the commencement of our history, and although no formal records have been kept, with a view to the preservation of facts of historical interest, our evidence, so far as it goes, is as reliable as if such care had been taken; yet, in respect to many important events, not so minute and particular as could have been desired. All the books and papers of Rev. William Johnston were destroyed in the burning of his house at Cherry Valley by the Indians, as will be more particularly related hereafter.

The history of almost every locality in this State is connected with the history of its previous occupation by the Indians. But the space to which I am limited, permits but a very brief reference to Indian history. All that the most industrious research can discover, as to the origin and character of the red man, his wars with the white man and with those of his own race, is to be found in many volumes of local and general history.

Commonly, the history of the first occupation by the whites, of whatever portion of this country, has been the history of aggression upon the occupation of the native Indian tribes. But the immediate occupation and settlement of this valley by our ancestors is an exception to the remark just made ; although the Susquehanna Valley had long been the Indian's favorite haunt and hunting ground.

The Susquehanna Valley originally was part of the domain of the six nations. The tribes constituting the six nations, viz: the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, Senecas and Tuscaroras, resided mainly along a line running from east to west through the central portion of the State. The Susquehanna Valley was border territory, in which Indians from those and other tribes dwelt quite promiscuously ; and either temporarily or in permanent villages, as suited their convenience. These were sometimes spoken of as Susquehanna Indians, which indicated only Indians of this locality. There was no tribe bearing that name. The Aquagas, understood to have been Mohawks, constituted a considerable village or settlement at Aquaga, now Windsor, Broome Co. The Schohary tribe, so called, was composed of Mohawks, Mohicans, Delawares, Tuscaroras and Oneidas. A part of the Indian settlement at this place (Sidney Plains) were Husatunnus, and the rest probably Mohawks or Onondagas.

From public records it appears that the Onondagas and Cayugas, claiming the Susquehanna and lands adjacent, to the exclusion of the other tribes of the six nations, so far as respects the right to convey, in 1683 granted the same to the Dutch Government. And afterwards, when the Province of New York had passed to the British Government, the grant was confirmed by the Indians to the King of England. These were not very formal transactions, but as much so as was customary in treaties with the Indian tribes. The consideration was nominal, and the territory quite indefinite, as respects location and boundary.

The line between this county (Delaware) and Broome, run according to the treaty of Fort Stanwix, of 1768, and known as

the "line of property," was the boundary settled with the Indians by that treaty. From a marked beech tree, the corner of Otsego and Delaware counties, which stands or formerly did stand, on what is now an island near the mouth of the Unadilla river (formerly on the main land and a part of Col. Johnston's farm), this boundary line of the Indian territory continued up the Unadilla river, through the town of Bridgewater, to near its source, and thence to a point between Fort Stanwix and Oneida Lake. I take this line as described on an ancient map. By this treaty, the territory east of the line described, which includes the Susquehanna Valley, from the mouth of the Unadilla up, is ceded to King George the 3d. The territory west is recognized as Indian territory; not, however, excluding the Mohawks, who continued to reside on the Mohawk, east of the line described; but who, as I suppose, had sold most of their lands.

This treaty is a very formal document. Besides other considerations it acknowledges the payment of ten thousand four hundred and sixty pounds, seven shillings, three pence, sterling, by Sir Wm. Johnson, agent for the King; and is executed by the chiefs, on the part of the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, Senecas and Tuscaroras. The boundary line is recited at length: Beginning at the mouth of Cherokee, or Hogohege, river, where it empties into the Ohio river, and running from thence up and along the south side of said river to Kittanning, which is above Fort Pitt, and thence from point to point, to "opposite where Tiana derha falls into the Susquehanna; thence to Tiana-derha, and up the west side of the west branch thereof, by a direct line, to Canada Creek, at the west of the carrying place, beyond Fort Stanwix."

The first particular account of the upper portion of the Susquehanna Valley, and mention of this exact locality at which we are assembled, of which I have any information, is contained in a letter of Rev. Gideon Hawley, giving a narrative of his journey to Aquaga in 1753. He had been ordained a missionary to the Indians, and had commenced his work at Stockbridge, under the patronage of Rev. Jonathan Edwards. In this letter, which

is to be found in Documentary History of New York, Vol. 3, quite interesting, but too long to quote, he first gives an account of an excursion into the Mohawk country, in the course of which he visited Schoharry, where, he says, are three decent meeting-houses, and two dominies; the one "a Calvinian." *Quere.* Was this Calvinian our dominie, Johnston? Of whom more hereafter.

In May, 1753, in company with Deacon Woodbridge and others, Mr. Hawley set out for Aquaga, by way of Albany, Schenectady, Mohawk Castle, the Otsego Lake, and thence down the Susquehanna river by canoe to Aquaga.

Some persons in this audience will remember a stone heap, which we used to pass many years ago, by the roadside a half mile below Unadilla Village, and commonly called, the "Indian Monument." The significance of this monument Mr. Hawley explains. In the course of his narrative he states, that during his journey in Schoharie county, he saw their Indian guide pick up a stone and cast upon a heap, which for ages had been accumulating by passengers like him. He enquired why he observed that rite. The Indian's answer was, that his father practised it and enjoined it upon him.

The party proceeded down the river, with some adventures, which he describes, and "June 3, Lord's day, passed a considerable village; some families of which were Husatunnuk Indians, speaking the same language as the Stockbridge tribe. They stood on the bank (he says) and beheld us. At this place, from the northwest, rolls into the Susquehanna a river which is navigable a day's journey. Its name, Teyonadelhough." Here they left their Indian guide, who had proved himself a worthless fellow, and the next day arrived at Aquaga. The description of the river that flowed into the Susquehanna, and the distance from Aquaga, identify this place.

The name of the river which we call Unadilla, in different papers of ancient date is spelled so differently that we scarcely recognize it. This is accounted for by the fact, that the pronunciation by the Indians is differently understood by different hear-

ers, and written accordingly. Thus, by Mr. Hawley it is written, Teyonadelhough. On an old map in Documentary History, Ti-anaderhah. The Chieftain Brant, in a letter contained in Mr. Campbell's History of the Border Warfare of New York, writes "Tunadilla." The same is true in respect to other Indian names; as Aquaga, written by Mr. Hawley, Ouohoghwage, &c.

The exact locality of the Indian settlement noticed by Mr. Hawley is uncertain. Indian relics, among which are flint arrow-heads in great numbers, indicate either the knoll near the railroad bridge on this side of the river, a few rods below us, or a similar elevation of ground directly opposite, on the other side of the river, or a table-land half a mile further down, on Milton Johnston's farm. Each of these places exhibits similar evidence of occupation by Indians. The "knoll" on this side was an elevation of ground remarkable for its regularity of formation. As I recollect it, some twenty rods more or less from the river channel, perhaps fifteen feet above the level of the flat on all sides, twenty or thirty rods long and ten rods wide on the top, which was as level as the flat below, and the banks sloping on all sides. This knoll was above high water mark. The flat on all sides was subject to be overflowed. Apple trees were growing there, when the place was first visited by white men, which continued long since the time of my memory. There were old corn hills on the flats near by. This "knoll" was mainly removed, and used by the Midland Company in constructing their embankment and road from the river to the depot near by; an act of barbarianism against which I here record my protest. In digging away and removing this earth, Indian skeletons and relics were found, which indicated that it had been used as a place of burial.

It is stated in a note in *French's Gazetteer* that "at this place was the site of an old Indian fort. Three acres of ground were enclosed by mounds of earth, surrounded by a ditch." The outlines of this work are remembered by persons still living, but have now disappeared. This is believed to have been the work of a race of inhabitants more ancient than the Indian tribes who occupied the country, when discovered by Europeans. The John-

stons lived for many years at the "knoll." Their first habitation was built of logs. It is proper to add that this Indian settlement is the locality referred to as "Unadilla" in early official papers, and during the Revolutionary war. The town of Unadilla, Otsego county, was formed in 1792, which I think has led to some confusion as to places. For instance, in *French's Gazetteer*, under the article or head "Unadilla," meaning the town of Unadilla, it is stated that "a conference took place between General Herkimer and Brant, the Indian warrior, at Unadilla, in July, 1777." It is well known, as I shall soon come to state more particularly, that this conference took place at what is now Sidney Plains, but in 1777 was known as Unadilla.

It is stated in *French's Gazetteer*, in a marginal note,--and truly (I presume) that the town Sidney was named for Sir Sidney Smith, the British Admiral, and first applied by John Mandeville, an English school master, then living in Sidney Plains. It is to be regretted that instead of going so far for a name this place had not been allowed to retain its original and more appropriate name of "Tianaderrah" or Unadilla.

FIRST SETTLEMENT.

Rev. William Johnston and his son, Witter, (late Colonel Johnston) came to this place on foot; driving a cow from Cherry Valley or beyond, arriving here May 10, 1772. They came by an Indian path, and conducted by an Indian guide. The father remained till fall, making such preparations as they could for the accommodation and maintenance of a large family, which was to remove to this, their new home in the wilderness, the next season.

Dominie Johnston (as for brevity and convenience I shall frequently designate the father of the Johnston family) returned to his family in Curry's Bush, now Florida, Montgomery county, leaving Witter to pass the winter alone, or with such Indian company as he might happen to have. It may be remarked here that the Indians remaining at this place were ever kind and friendly to the family, aiding them when in straits for provisions and also affording such help in case of sickness in the family, as their ex-

perience and skill enabled them to do. In June following, the entire family, with the exception of the eldest son (who was then married, and who died about the close of the war; and never came here) removed to this place,—consisting of the parents, the two sons, Witter and Hugh, commonly called Hugy, (then about ten years of age,) and four daughters. They came with all their effects, in canoes or bateaux, down the river from Otsego Lake. Rev. William Johnston (born in Dublin, Ireland, in 1713,) was then about sixty years of age. He had received a thorough education at Edinburgh University, Scotland,—four years in the literary and three in the theological department. He came to this country a young man; and married a Miss Cummins, an English lady. I am unable to state where he had resided during all the time prior to his removal to this place, principally, it is believed, in the vicinity of Albany and Schenectady, and at Curry's Bush and Warren's Bush. His occupation had been that of minister of the gospel, and of the Presbyterian Calvinistic faith. His wife was a lady of education and accomplishments, and was in the receipt of an income from England of £150 per annum, but which was never remitted after the breaking out of the war.

The Dominie, it seems, went out from his former home somewhat as the patriarch Abraham did, "not knowing whither he went," nevertheless, "in faith that he should receive an inheritance." One Bradstreet had a patent or grant of a large tract of land lying south of the Susquehanna, which he claimed came to the Susquehanna at its junction with the Unadilla. He had offered Mr. Johnston lands without other consideration than that of settling on his tract. When Mr. Johnston stopped at this place, he supposed he was on the Bradstreet tract. It turned out, however, that the Bradstreet tract did not come to the river; and the Johnstons, on discovering the mistake, chose to remain and purchase of Banyer & Wallace, the true proprietors, rather than go back from the river, and receive land without price, from Bradstreet. The price to be paid was seventy-five cents or a dollar per acre. Wallace turned out a Tory, and his property was confiscated. After the close of the war, and after the death of Dominie John-

ston, payment was made by Col. Witter Johnston into the State Treasury, and the title of the Johnston heirs was confirmed by act of the Legislature.

The selection of this tract of 520 acres, was most judicious ; a better could not have been made between Otsego Lake and the mouth of the Unadilla. The hill opposite, commonly called "Moses' Hill," was bare of timber, having been frequently burned over by the Indians to facilitate the pursuit of game ; and afforded an excellent look-out. From this hill the valley could be surveyed for miles, and doubtless from this eminence the Johnstons often overlooked their estate, then mostly covered with timber, and anticipated the time, when instead, they would behold green pastures and meadows, and fields of waving corn and wheat, as we do now. And yet they could have scarcely seen in imagination the landscape as we see it to-day.

I know no section of country presenting such a succession of beautiful landscapes, as does the Valley of the Susquehanna,— and nowhere in this beautiful valley, a more charming view than from a point a mile west of the spot where we now stand ; and where at a glance you have the Susquehanna and Unadilla rivers flowing together ; small islands fringed with willows, broad meadows and plains ; the Midland Railroad winding round the point of old Moses' hill, and the valleys stretching up and away on either side.

I confess myself partial to Sidney Plains and its surroundings. Nowhere, for me, does the sun shine so pleasantly on hill-side and plain as here. Nowhere does the Susquehanna flow so gently and sweetly as here ; and notwithstanding the attachments I have formed elsewhere, and that what of life's work I have done, I have done elsewhere ; here, where I first saw the light, would I for the last time see the sun go down.

The family refrained, improving their farm, and encountering such trials and privations as their situation, distant from settlements of civilized people, necessitated, till the summer of 1777. There was no mill nearer than the Mohawk, and no highway but the river. For several years, their only meal or flour was ob-

tained by pounding corn in a mortar, which they did every morning for the day's supply. On Saturday a double portion was invariably prepared. The first grist-mill in this vicinity, was built by Carr, on Carr's creek, a few miles east of this place, on the site of what was afterwards Baxter's Mills. The upper or running stone is exhibited here to-day, the table or desk from which I now read. The date of the construction of this mill I am not able to give. One had been previously built on the Oule-out.

After the declaration of Independence, and in the summer of 1777, affairs began to assume a threatening aspect to settlers in this valley, though far removed from the theatre of regular military operations. The Johnstons were warmly attached to the Colonial cause. The six nations, with the exception of the Oneidas, adhered to the King, and were become dangerous neighbors. Brant, the Mohawk chief, with his warriors, traversed the Susquehanna Valley and the country adjacent: neither families nor settlements were safe from his hostile incursions, unless protected by a military force. Like the wolf, his whereabouts to-day could not be calculated from that of yesterday.

Brant (Thayendanegea), had been patronized by Sir William Johnson, the British Superintendent of Indian Affairs, on account of the talent he had exhibited when a boy; and perhaps, also, on account of his (Sir William Johnson's), relations to Brant's sister. Brant had been educated at the Indian Mission, under Rev. Eleazer Wheelock, at Lebanon. Mr. Wheelock's letters, bearing date 1762, (published in Documentary History) speak favorably of the boy Joseph (Brant), as being studious and diligent. Brant spoke and wrote the English language well. He had associated with well bred and educated people. He had been in England, and well received there in aristocratic circles. His portrait was painted by an eminent artist in England, and he is probably as faithfully represented in paintings and engravings as is General Washington. He was courteous and polite when he chose to be, and knew how to make himself agreeable. He had been instructed in the doctrines of Christianity, and was a

communicant in the church up to near the time of his engaging in the war. Both before and after the war, he translated portions of the New Testament into the Mohawk tongue for the benefit of his people.

But, when the war of the Revolution broke out, having no interest in the contest, and without motive, unless a mercenary one, or the indulgence of a savage lust of blood and plunder, he enlisted with his people in the service of the King. He was, no doubt, a brave and sagacious warrior ; but his expeditions against quiet, unprotected settlements, and destruction of families without respect to age, sex or condition, relieve us from any obligation of charity to his bloody memory.

Published accounts of Brant's visit or visits to this place in the summer of 1777 vary somewhat. Mr. Campbell, whom I regard as reliable, in his History of the Border Warfare of New York, says that in June of that year, Brant went up from Aquaga to Unadilla, with a party of 70 or 80 warriors, and sent for the officers of the militia company and Rev Mr. Johnston ; " informed them that they were in want of provisions ; that if they could not get them by consent, they must by force ; complained that they had been threatened by General Schuyler, and that the Mohawks were not at liberty to pass and repass as formerly," &c. That they staid two days and returned, the inhabitants letting them have provisions. And that in July, General Herkimer marched to Unadilla with 380 militia, and was met there by Brant with 130 warriors. That threatening words passed between General Herkimer and Brant, and their men ; but that the interview terminated without bloodshed. General Herkimer's object was to induce Brant to remain neutral. Brant avowed his purpose to adhere to the King's party.

Another account, (as is stated in a published life of Brant), attributes a treacherous purpose on the part of General Herkimer to seize Brant, which led to a hostile demonstration on the part of Brant's warriors.

It is probable that there were two visits of Brant to this place ; although I have not met with the statement of that fact in other accounts, which I have seen, of Brant's movements ;

and the family tradition, as I have it, is of only one visit by Brant. And that tradition is, that Brant met General Herkimer by appointment in the summer of 1777, Brant with 110 warriors encamping on the high plane or table-land, on what is now Milton Johnston's farm, a mile below; and General Herkimer on the Huyck flat, one and a half or two miles above the place where we now stand. That they held their conference on the Bradley farm, midway between; perhaps a quarter of a mile up the Railroad from the station. That Dominie Johnston was present at the interview. That Brant met the Dominie in a friendly manner, and asked him on which side he was. That Mr. Johnston replied that he was on the side of the people; that Brant placed his hand on his (Johnston's), arm in a familiar way, and told him he was right, and that he was a brave man. Another account, derived through another member of the Johnston family, mentions that threatening words passed between the Dominie and Brant; and that the Dominie shook his fist in Brant's face and told him "he was not afraid of an Indian;" and that Brant intimated that they might meet again. These accounts are not inconsistent, and probably both are true. Our authority for the statement that threatening words passed between Mr. Johnston and Brant, is also authority that Capt. Cox, of General Herkimer's party, drew his sword and threatened to arrest Brant; whereupon, Brant gave a signal, and his warriors suddenly appeared, prepared to protect him.

All the circumstances, and the order in which events transpired at this interesting interview, probably cannot now with certainty be known. I am not aware that any written statement, by any party then present, exists. I see no reason to suppose that treachery on either side was contemplated. Although the parties met for a friendly conference, it was not unnatural that in the course of the conversation they should become excited, and use threatening language. The fact that no violence or blood-shed was committed, should be received as evidence that none was premeditated. During their stay, some depredations were committed in open day, on the clothes line at the Johnston house, by one of Brant's party. On complaint being made to the chief

he passed it off lightly :—“Ha! These Indians? I can’t control them.”

It is not unlikely that some of these incidents of Braut’s visit to this place, as related by the Johnston family, took place at the one visit, and some at the other.

Soon after these occurrences, the Johnston family removed, for safety, to Cherry Valley. Before leaving, they secreted some farming utensils, and such articles as they could not, or did not choose to carry with them, burying them in the ground or under the hearth.

On the 11th of November, 1778, occurred the cruel and bloody massacre at Cherry Valley, under the lead of Capt. Walter Butler, of infamous memory, and the Mohawk Chieftain, Brant. I have not space for details of the events of this woeful day, further than they relate to the Johnston family. Whether others of the Susquehanna settlers had taken refuge in Cherry Valley, and if so, what their fate was, I am not informed.

A fort had been erected at that place, and a military force stationed there for the protection of the inhabitants. Capt., or Col. Alden was in command of the fort. He had received notice on the 8th of November, of an intended attack on the place by the Indians; but treated it lightly, supposing it unfounded. On receiving this information, the inhabitants had asked permission of Capt. Alden to remove into the fort, or at least to remove their valuables there for safe keeping, which request he had denied.

On the night of the 10th of November, the enemy encamped on a hill, covered with evergreens, about a mile S. W. from the fort. On the morning of the 11th, the day on which the massacre took place, (for details of which, probably Mr. Campbell, the author before referred to, is the most reliable authority,) Dominie Johnston’s sons, Witter and Hughy, were at the fort. Witter was there in the service, and was probably there on duty. Hughy was a boy, fourteen years old. How, or why he happened to be there, does not appear. • The family resided one to two miles distant, in the direction opposite, as I understand, from the direction in which the enemy were approaching.

A man rode up to the fort, with his arm shattered by a shot from an Indian, and gave the first alarm, that the Indians were coming. The word passed between the brothers that they must run home and alarm the family. Hugh, who was a stout, active boy, and swift of foot, started at once, and ran at his utmost possible speed, supposing his brother was following him; and did not look back, till passing over a hill which was in the route, he looked back and first knew that he was running alone. He had heard guns, and the tumult which the alarm had given, and then supposed his brother had been killed. But he made no pause until he arrived at his father's house; and rushing in, he exclaimed, "Run for your lives—the Indians are coming!" The family had heard the alarm gun at the fort; and the old gentleman had got up his horse to ride down and see what it meant. He was a resolute man, and at first refused to flee. One of the daughters, (afterwards Mrs. Neally) who possessed a good deal of her father's spirit, declared she would not go unless her father did. That circumstance, and the earnestness with which Hugh urged them to hasten their flight, prevailed with the father to join the family in an attempt to escape. The mother, who was feeble, was placed on a horse, and, the rest on foot, all hastily left their house, for concealment in the woods. The party consisted of the parents, the son Hugh, four daughters, and a lad, seven years of age, afterwards, and for many years, favorably known in this community as Capt. McMaster. Passing in the direction opposite that from which the Indians were approaching, they soon came to a turn in the road where was an old ashery, which helped conceal them from the sight of the enemy, who were coming up the road. Directly, they were in the woods, and secreted themselves as best they could. The Indians came up so soon after the family left, that before they reached the woods they saw the smoke of their dwelling on fire. They remained in the woods the night of the 11th, a cold, rainy, November night; the Indians passing so near as to be heard by them. It is related that there was a woman with the party in their place of concealment, with a young child. That while the Indians were passing near them, the mother lay with her hand close to the child's mouth, with the

purpose, if the child should make the least noise, immediately to suffocate it. The child slept. The Indians passed on. The next day the Johnstons found shelter in the fort. Soon after they went to the Mohawk, and after that to Curry's Bush, in Montgomery or Schoharie County, where they remained till after the war. The Dominie lived till after the proclamation of peace, but never returned to this place. He died in 1783.

I recur for a moment to the boy Hughey, and the 11th November. I regard his conduct on that day as an exhibition of genuine heroism. It should be remembered that he was but 14 years of age. He was at the fort, a place of safety, when the alarm was given in a manner calculated to appal the stoutest heart. He knew the enemy and their mode of warfare. The massacres at Wyoming, Harpersfield, German Flats, and other settlements, were of recent occurrence. A natural instinct of self-preservation would have led any one but a disciplined soldier to seek safety in the fort. But he hesitated not a moment; thinking only of the safety of the family, and exerting himself to the utmost to that end. The discovery that his brother was not with him, and the belief that he had been killed, did not dishearten him. When arrived at his home, instead of placing himself under the protection of his father, a brave and experienced man, he insisted upon the flight of the family as the only possible means of safety, and succeeded in carrying his point against the first declared determination of his father. The family were all saved. They could have been saved in no other way. If the boy had been less prompt or less efficient, beyond doubt the entire family would have been destroyed. Brant had not forgotten the insult he had received from the Dominie, when the latter defied him, and told him he was not afraid of an Indian. The boy's whole conduct seems like the result of an inspiration. It was the inspiration of true heroism, and deserves a record on the enduring page of history.

Between thirty and forty persons were massacred in Cherry Valley on that 11th November; among others Capt. Alden, who lodged in town and was not able to reach the fort. Others were

carried away into captivity. Mr. Campbell makes no mention of the Johnston family, for the reason, probably, that they were saved.

That family all survived the war. All lived to a good old age, all brought up families, and a numerous posterity still survive. Many have passed away.

This is an original manuscript sermon of Rev. William Johnston. It appears to have been a Thanksgiving sermon, and probably written in 1782. It is written in a neat hand, but with such economy of paper and words, using contractions with which we are not familiar, that it is not easy reading.

Capt. Johnston, of whom I have been speaking as the boy "Hughy," was a resident of this place after the war, about fifty years, universally esteemed and respected. He died in October, 1833, at the age of seventy. He was a man of friendly, genial temper, always relished a good story and a hearty laugh. In action was ever prompt and efficient. An incident will illustrate better than any words I can select, though not otherwise important.

He had been engaged one day at some work on his farm near the river, about where the Midland Railroad crosses, just below us. A hired man drove a pair of oxen (hitched to a cart) to the river to drink. On this side there was no bank, and the water shallow, but towards the other shore deep with a steep bank. The river was not high, but somewhat swollen. Through the awkwardness of the teamster, instead of being turned around and brought out, the oxen were allowed to go forward, and soon were in deep water, making for the other shore. The danger, of course, was that they would become involved with yoke and cart and be drowned. Capt. Johnston perceived the situation at a glance, and, without waiting for a canoe, although there was one on the other side that would have come at a call, throwing off his hat and boots, he plunged in after his property. I happened to be in the field on the opposite side, and not far from the river, (a boy at that time,) and hearing some noise that indicated trouble, I ran to the river. There were the oxen, just landed

against the bank, the water up to their yoke, and the Captain in the middle of the stream swimming, his broad shoulders heaving above the surface with every sweep of his strong arms, and going through the water like a steamboat. With some help, which was soon at hand, the oxen were disengaged from the cart and turned back to the other shore. Capt. Johnston was then between fifty and sixty years of age.

Another incident of the river will show how women met their responsibilities in the "early times."

That those who are not acquainted with the river as it was then may appreciate my story, it is proper to state that, in time of very high water, the entire flat between the two rivers, on the opposite side of the Susquehanna, as also on this side below where the Midland Railroad crosses the main street, and quite out to the highway, would be flooded; so that opposite and below where Capt. Johnston then lived (some thirty to fifty rods below the railroad crossing), would be an expanse of water a mile in width. On this side of the main channel of the river, the bank was lined with large trees, buttonwoods, butternuts, soft maples, etc., and extending the entire width of Capt. Johnston's farm along the river. Where the river broke over its banks, the current, as well as in the main channel, was very strong. In my younger days I have sat for hours at such a time, watching from the opposite side, the flood-wood and ice as they went crashing through and amongst those trees.

At a time of one of these very high floods, as related to me by Mr. Abner Johnston, their family were astonished one day to see a woman, who lived on the opposite bank, and is well remembered in this community, Mrs. Capt. McMaster, come paddling her canoe alone up to their very door. In crossing she must have passed through the line of trees I have described. The strength of the current in the main channel, which at such time swept entirely over the small Island in the middle of the stream at that point, would render it impossible to pass higher up. Her errand at the Johnston house was something in regard to a job of weaving; perhaps to get a skein or two of yarn to finish it up.

Having done her errand, she stepped into her canoe again with as little concern as a lady now-a-days would step into a carriage to ride across a bridge, pushed her light shallop from the shore, and returned the way she came.

To appreciate the courage, self-possession and skill necessary for such a feat, one must have seen the Susquehanna at that place and during such a flood. I do not believe there is a woman in the State of New York at this day who would undertake it. I doubt whether there is a man present to-day, who would volunteer to undertake it, without some stronger inducement than a skein or two of yarn to finish a job of weaving.

Canoe navigation was much more practiced in the "early times" than now; and of necessity, before bridges were built and roads opened. The canoe was the carryall and the river the highway—whether to mill or to meetings, or on visits, and whether up or down the stream; though with the material difference that the descent, like all descents since the descent of Virgil's hero to Avernus, was easy; while of the ascent it might be said, as then, *hic labor, hoc opus est*—this is work indeed. Capt. Johnston once took a canoe load of people down to Jericho to meeting, and is reported to have said, that "setting the canoe back, sweat all the good of the meeting out of him."

Col. Witter Johnston continued in the service till the close of the war. I am not able to give details of his campaigns. His services were with the State troops, and mainly in the Mohawk country. He was with Col. Willet, a very gallant officer, in some of his expeditions. It was in one of Col. Willet's engagements with Indians and tories, at West Canada Creek, that Walter Butler, whose name is justly condemned to everlasting infamy for his many atrocities, was killed. He died, as he deserved to die, by the tomahawk and scalping knife, at the hand of an Oneida Indian, who, as he lifted the bloody scalp from his head, shrived the departing spirit with the words, Sherry Valley—Remember Sherry Valley!

Most persons present to-day, who knew Col. Johnston, will remember him only as an old man. He did not possess the

robust frame, the vitality, and buoyant spirit of his brother Hugh. But he was a man of great force of character. Although the father was nominally the pioneer, Col. Witter is entitled, more than any other, to be regarded as the founder of this settlement, the first in the Susquehanna valley in this State. He came with his father at their first visit, and remained in charge when the old gentleman returned to the family. He contributed more than any other to sustain the family, in their early trials and hardships. His pay as an army officer was all devoted to that purpose. In after life, when in prosperous circumstances, he was accustomed to lead in all enterprises of a public character, whether civil or religious, where means and effort were required. He was a man of strong will, sometimes called wilful, or, as some would say, "set in his way." If to be governed by his own conscience and judgment in matters that concerned himself, is to be wilful or "set in his way," doubtless Col. Johnston was such a man. His early training and experience had taught him self-reliance. Perhaps this trait of character in him was in part constitutional. It is said to crop out occasionally in some of his posterity. There are some papers of his, of quite ancient date, which I shou'd like to read if I had the time. Here is one, a letter to Capt. Caman, as it is brief and characteristic, I will read it :

" SCHENECTADY, December 13, 1783.

SIR :—I have the pleasure to inform you that McCoy is taken, and has received one hundred lashes for the freedom he had taken in disposing of your jacket, and some other articles he had in his care. I likewise inform you that I have received as much corduroy and trimmings as will make a jacket, excepting the lining, from said McCoy, and as I do not think it proper to trust it with him again, will keep it and the coat till I hear from you.

I am your humble servant,

WITTER JOHNSTON.

To CAPT. CAMAN."

From the pleasure that the Colonel acknowledges in being able to inform Capt. Caman that McCoy had received one hun-

dred lashes for stealing his (Capt. Caman's) jacket, I have no doubt that, as a theological dogma, Col. Johnston held the doctrine of retributive justice.

Col. Johnston used to speak with a just feeling of pride of having met and dined with Gen. Washington. That was, probably, at the time of Gen. Washington's visit to Fort Stanwix, and to Otsego Lake, in 1784.

The family name of Col. Johnston's wife was Campbell. Capt. Johnston's wife was sister of the late Cyrus Strong, of Binghamton. Both were women eminent for piety and good deeds.

Persons in this audience who attended public worship at this place 45 to 60 years ago will remember the quite deaf and infirm old gentleman, who was accustomed to sit in the pulpit, holding an ear trumpet, Mr. SAMUEL ROGERS, who settled at Unadilla in the early spring of 1796. He was born in North Bolton, Tolland Co., Conn., January 30, 1764, and was married to Sarah Skinner in her native town of East Windsor, in the same State, Nov. 24, 1785. In the year 1790, he removed to Granville, Hampshire Co., Mass., where he resided until his removal to Unadilla. In the fall of 1811, he removed to a house built by himself in that year, on the westerly side of the Catskill and Oxford turnpike, about midway between the Susquehanna and Unadilla rivers; and here continued to reside until his death, in March, 1829. His widow survived him, and died in October, 1850, at the age of 83.

Mr. and Mrs. Rogers were communicants of the Congregational Church before their removal from New England, and at the first organization of the Congregational Church at Sidney Plains, or soon after, connected themselves with that organization. Mr. Rogers was a mechanic, and worked at his trade, that of a shoemaker, down to the period of his death. He had a great love of books, and was a constant reader from his early youth. He acquired without a teacher, a respectable knowledge of mathematics, and became an accurate surveyor, and occasionally during his life worked at that business simply as matter of accom-

modation to his friends and neighbors. His eagerness in the pursuit of knowledge led him, while engaged at his trade, at odd hours, and after his daily task was done, to study medicine, and to acquire such knowledge of diseases and medicines, as would have enabled him to have become a reputable practitioner; though outside of his own family he made little or no practical use of the knowledge he had thus acquired. After he had arrived at the age of 56 years, he studied and became master of the Latin language.

I do not know that Mr. Rogers ever applied his mind to legal learning. But here is a contract drawn by him for the conveyance by Dovener, of the meeting-house lot to the Religious Society of Sidney Plains, which, on account of the specialty of the consideration (there being no pecuniary consideration), and on account of other specialties in the agreement, required the learning and skill of a lawyer to draw, and is as complete as any paper of the kind I ever saw. I thought on first perusal that there was a fault in the description of the premises, an omission. But on further examination I am satisfied that what a technical lawyer would have added, his acute and logical mind perceived to be surplusage, or rather did not perceive at all. There is neither a word wanting, nor a word too many. I will venture to say that my learned friend, the President, cannot draw a better paper, and in respect to penmanship, not half as good.

There was no man in this society, in his time, of so much intellectual culture as Mr. Rogers, except the minister; and not always excepting the minister. I remember the friendliness with which he used to treat me, when a boy I went to his shop of errands. I did not then know how much I could have learned from him. He was the father of the late Chas. S. Rogers, and of the Rogers brothers present here to-day.

DEA. ISRAEL SMITH moved on the farm next west of the Johnston farm in 1790. He was of Puritan ancestry, came here from Brattleborough, Vt., and received from the State a grant of 640 acres in the "Vermont sufferers" tract, in compensation for loss sustained by failure of title to land purchased from the State,

and afterwards surrendered by the State to Vermont. His father, grandfather and great-grandfather each bore the remarkable name of John Smith; and each was the youngest son of his father. Dea. Israel was the youngest son of the last John Smith. How it happened that he too was not named John, I do not know, unless as I suspect, some one of his elder brothers had appropriated the name, thus defrauding my ancestor ~~out~~ of his birthright. This course of descent did not result in the physical deterioration of this branch of the Smith race. Dea. Israel was a man of extraordinary stature, standing several inches over six feet. He had served in the Revolutionary War, and participated in the battle of Saratoga in October, 1777, under Gen. Gates, which resulted in the surrender of the British General Burgoyne. This [exhibiting it] is the powder horn which he wore at that battle. He led his company as Captain on that memorable day, in place of that officer, who was temporarily absent.

His two oldest sons, Israel Jr. and Simeon, then young men, came on from Vermont the year before the rest of the family came, and commenced an improvement on their tract, and continued to reside upon it during their lives.

Dea. Smith's family consisted of four sons and four daughters. All except one living most of their lives in this vicinity, and attaining the average age of more than seventy-five years, and retaining during their lives the plain manners, and the industrious frugal habits, which they brought with them from Vermont. They were a family of scrupulous integrity, and strict religious principles.

The crossing of the Susquehanna in the time of high water, as before related, was by one of this family. An incident is related of another of the daughters, Mrs Redfield, which contrasts pretty strongly with the easy journeys made in palace cars in our times; and that is, that after the family had been several years settled in this neighborhood, she returned on a visit to her former home in Vermont on horseback, carrying an infant child in her arms the entire distance.

Dea. Israel Smith died in 1811. His posterity are numerous

and widespread over the country.* The name and race seem likely not to become extinct during the next century.

GOLD BACON is entitled to brief mention in these sketches, not as a representative, but rather as a very exceptional character. For the last twenty years of his life he owned and occupied the farm lying below the railroad, between the Susquehanna and Unadilla rivers. He had been a soldier ; came from Connecticut, and first settled on a farm about four miles below this place, in the then town of Jericho.

He never married ; and lived most of the time entirely alone. He was industrious and economical, and accumulated considerable property. I think he was regarded by those who did not understand his character as a very sordid miser. His mode of life would naturally lead a person not well acquainted with him to that conclusion. He slept in his barn, and prepared his meals, when he required a fire for that purpose, in a hut not half as well furnished as the poorest cabin of the Irish laborer on the railroad. He had money which he used for what were to him the necessities and conveniences of life. He never oppressed or extorted from the poor, and was more benevolent to such than many a man who, for a pretense, bestows his money in large sums on some ostentatious charity. I find his name on the subscription for building the first meeting-house in this place, 1806, containing about seventy names ; and a greater number giving less, than there were who gave more than he did. I also find his name on subscriptions to ministers salary. I make this statement for the purpose of correcting a prejudice against his memory, as being a miser in the worst sense of that term, which he was not.

At some seasons of the year, especially in the haying season, he often employed several hands, paying them liberally. He was rather a popular employer. Gold Bacon never risked his money by depositing in banks. Sometimes he would leave a bag of specie, for safe keeping, with a neighbor, in whom he had confidence ; sometimes he would hide it in his barn. Two of

* Gov. Hayes, of Ohio, is one of Dea. Smith's descendants.

his hired men, brothers by name of Williams, once found and appropriated a considerable sum of the old man's money, for which they were convicted of grand larceny and sent to State prison. He was reticent on the subject of religion, avowed no religious creed, and did not attend church. He sometimes gave offence to his neighbors, by taking care of his hay on Sunday. In all other respects, so far as I ever heard, he was strictly moral, and in this, I have no doubt, conscientious.

He was not sociable or social as we use those terms. He never entered into conversation on general topics, but possessed a remarkable talent at telling stories. He had had adventures by field and flood, and with wild beasts, and his fund of entertaining stories never failed. He frequently came to my father's house for provisions, and sometimes ate at table with the family. His manner was, to come in, sit down in silence for some minutes, and then apparently without anything to suggest, break out into one of his wonderful stories. He did not affect the society of women, but was kind and friendly to boys. We used to go to his hut sometimes of an evening or on a rainy day. He would treat generously with butternuts and apples, and then entertain us with some of his marvellous adventures. He never hesitated at dialogue, but where that came in he would rehearse with great particularity and effect.

One of his escapes was while he lived on the farm in Jericho, and mentioned by Mr. Randall in one of his series of interesting sketches, now or recently being published in a Norwich paper. Bacon lived, or stayed in a hut on the low flat. There happened in the fall of the year a remarkable flood in the Susquehanna river, referred to in after times as "The Pumpkin Fresh," from the fact that the corn fields along the river were overflowed and the pumpkins swept off, and floated down in great numbers. As Bacon used to tell the story, he found in the night ~~that~~, by stepping on the loose boards which constituted the floor of his cabin, that the water was rising fast, and that it was necessary for him to move. He had a pail of cold succotash from which he made a hasty meal, and taking his gun and axe, started for higher ground, which, however, on account of the

rapid rise of the water, he was unable to reach, and was obliged to take refuge or passage on a floating log. His log lodged, with other flood-wood against a tree; and there, on the flood-wood, and not in the tree, as some times understood, he took up his abode, till found and taken off in a canoe by Deacon Israel Smith, 2d, and another whose name I do not recollect. While staying there he had been able to kindle a fire and roast a pumpkin which floated to him, and on which he subsisted very comfortably. During his stay, as he used to relate, a "painter," which, like himself, had been drowned out of his log cabin, came swimming towards Bacon's raft. He had his gun; but having been some time loaded, and on account of exposure to wet, he feared it would not "go." It would not do to wait. He decided promptly to try his gun. If it missed fire he would be no worse off. If it "went," he thought he could reload in time for a close engagement, in case the "varmint" should insist upon landing. Fortunately the gun "went" the first time. The panther sought some other landing, and left Bacon unmolested.

From this sample of his adventures, persons may suspect that Bacon was accustomed to embellish his stories somewhat liberally. But I think he was entirely truthful. As already stated, he had been a soldier in the war of the Revolution. But he never boasted of heroic exploits. His stories of adventure in the war, so far as related to himself, were generally at his own expense. According to his own account of himself, he would not stand fire, and he had been a deserter. He used to relate that once while on guard, two officers from the enemy's camp came up to him; that he failed to challenge them or give an alarm; that one of them addressing him, said: "Who are you?" Bacon replied, "I am a sentry." The officer said, "You may come with us." "No," said the other; "let him stay where he is. He will do us no harm. He is a — fool." And so they passed on and left him.

Bacon's personal appearance was peculiar. In walking he used a long staff, which he clutched in the middle; and stooping forward at a very sharp angle, he moved quite rapidly. When in full dress, he wore a checked shirt, a coat cut after the old

continental pattern, with waistcoat to match, and a pair of buck-skin breeches much faded from long service, and that seemed never to wear out.

Gold Bacon died suddenly fifty years ago. His final resting place in yonder grave-yard is marked by a plain brown stone, on which is the appropriate inscription—

He toiled for heirs, he knew not who,
And straight was seen no more.

Time fails me to speak of the Averys, the Bradleys, the Baxters' the Clarks, and many others, who are justly entitled to be remembered on an occasion like this.

While collecting material for these sketches, I made note of some items with the intention of saying somewhat of the character which this community has always sustained as a religious community. But since understanding that a historical sermon was proposed as a part of the exercises of the day, it seemed proper for me to waive that topic.

On account of its bearing on another idea, however, I will state that since the organization of the first religious society in this place, it appears that there have been employed by that society nineteen or more different ministers, all from abroad—none of them born and raised here. While of the boys born and brought up within the circuit of the school district, of which this is the center, and the descendants of those born and brought up here, I count about a dozen lawyers, viz : the Rogers's, the Baxters, Clark, Johnston, Myers, Garvin, and others not necessary to name, every one of whom has gone abroad to practice his profession. So that we have the notable fact that while the people of Sidney Plains have always imported their ministers, they have always exported their lawyers. Whether this persistent policy accounts for the fact that this has always been a peaceable, law-abiding community ; or whether, being such a community, lawyers have found it necessary to go elsewhere to earn an honest living, I express no opinion. Another quere suggests itself, viz : What is there in the conditions of this place that so tends to the development or evolution of lawyers from common country boys? and to this quere I suggest no answer.

Notwithstanding this systematic policy of excluding lawyers, lawsuits have not always been excluded. The first law trial which I ever witnessed took place while I was a boy at school here. I do not remember who the parties were, nor the subject matter of the suit. What I especially remember in regard to that trial is, that Henry Page, of Unadilla, and Mr. Griswold, of Bainbridge, were opposing counsel; and the earnest eloquence with which each maintained the honesty of his own client, and inveighed against the wrong and dishonesty of his adversary.

I have not time to speak, as I would choose to do, of the material improvements which this valley has undergone in the hundred years which have now expired. After the settlement by the Johnstons and before the breaking out of the war, settlements had been made at various points. These at the commencement of hostilities, were abandoned. After peace was proclaimed the settlers, with the exception of tories, generally returned. The valley began rapidly to be occupied. In less than twenty years comfort and plenty abounded. Roads and bridges were constructed, mills erected, school-houses and churches built, religious societies organized, mechanical industries were introduced, and all the appliances of civilization were in operation.

The achievements of this people from the year 1783 to the commencement of this century are to me matters of profound astonishment. It seems to me no exaggeration to say that, considering population and resources, more was done for this valley in the first quarter century than in any half century since. Taking into account pecuniary resources, mechanical improvements and inventions, and the forces used in their application at the present time, it should be an easier undertaking now to construct a railroad from Albany to Binghamton, than it was then to make a wagon road from this place to Cooperstown. In 1806 the Congregational church edifice now occupied in this village was erected, and I verily believe with less effort than would be necessary to-day to rebuild it in a style suitable to the wants of the society, in case this house should be burned down.

And on the other hand what contrasts are presented, of the

present with the past of one hundred years ago. Then, if the Government would send a dispatch, often they would employ an Indian runner. If it was winter he would travel on snow-shoes. Now, besides the rapid transmission of mails by railroads to all parts of the country, a communication goes from here to New Orleans or London in less time than you can write a letter and carry it half a mile and deposit it in the postoffice.

Instead of the considerable business which farmers began to do in this valley about the year 1790 to 1800, in carrying grain by the sleigh road to Albany, to pay for their land, and to bring back a few luxuries which could not be procured in the country : now, trains of cars traverse the valley east and west, north and south, almost hourly, transporting thousands of tons of merchandise and merchantable products, and depositing wherever required. Where, then, you would travel all day and hear but the howl of a wolf, or the whoop of an Indian, now, nowhere can you get beyond the sound of a church bell, or the steam whistle of locomotive or factory.

Limiting my discourse to my time, I conclude by expressing the hope that when the exercises of this day shall close, and this meeting shall be ready to adjourn, it will adjourn to meet again one hundred years hence.

In making this suggestion, I would not trifle with a serious thought. Of course no one of this assembly can ever be present at another centennial celebration of the first settlement of the Susquehanna Valley. Before the century hand shall point *two* on the dial-face of time, we shall all have passed away. The very stones that mark our graves will be moss grown and falling to decay. But these hills and this plain will last—the Susquehanna will continue to flow. The sun will shine down on this beautiful landscape, a hundred years hence as it does to-day. Descendants of the early settlers of this valley will live. The posterity of Samuel Rogers, and of Deacon Israel Smith, and of Rev. William Johnston will live. May they live forever.

This address was listened to with great attention and interest and at the conclusion was loudly applauded.

The poem by Hon. BENJAMIN L. BAXTER, of Tecumseh, Michigan, was then read by that gentleman, as follows :

SIDNEY PLAINS, CENTENNIAL ODE.

A thousand years, the patriarchs of Eld
The glory of earth's setting suns beheld,
But not the triumphs, nor the changes, then,
Of centuries now, among the sons of men.

One hundred years ago, and all was still
Along these valleys, and from yonder hill
No sounds came echoing, save the panther's scream,
To wake the wild-wood from its summer dream,
Or it may be, the famished gray wolf's howl,
The croaking raven, or the hooting owl.

The red man roamed the forest, but in peace,—
Sought from the chase, nor glory, nor increase,
But simply sustenance,—no war whoop then
Awoke the echoes of the mountain glen,
No war-paint on his bow, nor on his brow,
The tomahawk was buried then, as now.
Yet not *as* now, for he was master then,
And his own heritage, both hill and glen.

The Susquehanna, from its thousand streams,
That grand old river of our childhood dreams,
Rolled then, as now, along its fertile shore,
Singing the same old song forevermore,—
While summer suns, lit with their golden rays
This wild-wood Eden, of those earlier days.

Thither our fathers came,
From Erin's golden sand,
From Scotia's hills, from Albion's isle,
Switzer, and Frank, and Welch, the while,
And German, from his fatherland.—

Passing the Pilgrims bound,
New England's rugged strand,
Thither they came, and here they found
Their home, our native land.

Not with a troop they came,
But pilgrims, one by one,
By birch canoe, or Indian trail,
Crossing the mountain or the vale,
They sought them out their home.

"God and the Right," they sought,
 The right to worship God,
 Freedom for speech, and deed, and thought,
 Freedom for them, and theirs, they sought,
 Untrammelled by the mists of schools,
 Untrammelled by the churchman's rules,

Taught only by the living word,
 And living spirit there,
 No bondsman's heart, or spirit stirred
 Our father's living prayer.

They dared the forest's gloom,
 The haunts of savage men,
 The wild beasts' lair
 Around them there,
 The reptile's poisonous breath,
 Hunger, and toil, and death,
 To build a home, perchance a tomb,
 Whither, in after years,
 Their children's children fain should come
 And gather round their fathers' home,
 Beside the mountain glen,
 And worship there their fathers' God,
 Upon their fathers' burial sod,
 Undimmed by doubts, or fears.

Yet not unblessed they came,
 Those sturdy men of old,
 Seeking no heritage of fame,
 Nor heritage of gold,
 But only God's free air to breathe,
 And God's free soil to till,
 And God's free worship on the plain,
 His freedom on the hill.

For though no outward sign
 Of cloud, or fire was there,
 Yet answering to a call Divine,
 They felt, and knew, that inward sign,
 That silent call, from deep to deep,
 That Macedonian call from sleep,
 •That wakes to work, and prayer ;
 And forth they went, and boldly trod ;
 Uncheered by man, yet blessed of God.

And woman too, was there to bless,
 Her gentle voice, her soft caress,
 The proud glance of her sunny eye,

As by his side she trod,
 Bespoke an aim, and purpose high,
 Her readiness to do, or die,
 With him, the chosen, by her side.
 Not the mere fondness of the bride,
 But earnest faith, and earnest prayer
 His work to cheer, his work to share,
 Her trust in manhood ; and in God.

And yet not long in peace
 Among these hills they dwelt,
 The mutterings of war increase,
 The ravages of war are felt—
 The peaceful Indian, savage now,
 Led by more savage men,
 Butler and Brant, and traitor bands,
 With darkened brows, and blood-red hands,
 Thirsting for vengeance, on they came
 From smoking Wyoming.

Powerless to meet the foe,
 Not knowing where to go,
 With hurried hands the feeble band
 Buried their treasures in the sand,
 And with their wives and little ones
 Fled to the forest hill.
 But, ere its brow they passed,
 One backward look they cast,
 Like her of old in Sodom's vale,
 But only heard the war-whoop on the blast
 Of angry foes, who found their vengeance fail.

Noiseless they hurried on,
 Homeless, and worn, and sad,
 Over the mountain, through the vale
 With hearts of oak, though fears assail,
 And small the hopes they had
 Thus to escape their savage foe,
 Yet all resolved, they onward go,
 And with their little ones and wives,
 A precious trust, of precious lives,
 Plod wearily and slow,
 Up Susquehanna's winding stream,
 Along Otsego's silver gleam,
 To where the Cherry Valley's waves
 Its hamlet of the forest laves.

Yet scarcely had they rested there,
 Among their country's kin,
 And prayed their grateful evening prayer,
 And sang their evening hymn,
 Before the subtle savage foe,
 Following their track of toil and wo,
 Burst on this peaceful valley too,
 With fearful yell, and wild halloo,
 And hands of blood, and brands of flame,
 To wipe out Unadilla's stain,
 And gave to Cherry Valley's plain,
 The fate, the fame of Wyoming,—
 And drove them forth to wander still,
 Along the banks of Cobleskill.

And there beneath its forest shade,
 The patriarch of the flock was laid,—
 That reverend sire, whose holy life
 And words of love mid scenes of strife,
 So long the aisles of prayer had trod,
 Guiding their feet, their hearts to God—
 Called to his Heavenly home away.
 Beside its banks his ashes lay,
 Ere yet the wanderers could return,
 Or war's fierce fires had ceased to burn.

But when again,
 On field and plain,
 The sounds of carnage cease,
 And, wrested from the tyrant's grasp,
 Our patriot fathers won at last
 Freedom, and Home, and peace,
 Back to their forest plain,
 These wandering pilgrims came,
 To hold again their dwellings here,
 Forgetful of their former fear,
 And seek, once more, its shelter and increase.

Those sturdy men of iron will,
 Whose memory lingers with us still,
 With brawny arms and placid brow,
 Who laid these lofty forests low,
 The Hemlock, and the towering Pine,
 Waking sweet music in the wind,
 The gnarled Oak, the Chestnut grove,
 Beneath whose shade the children rove.
 The Beach, whose fruitage strews the ground,

The Maple, with its glory crowned,
 Tottering before that iron blow,
 Where are the men who laid them low?
 "God's acre" holds them now,—
 While we, their children's children tell,
 The names, the deeds, we love so well,
 As gathered from each distant shore,
 We come to trace their memories o'er,
 And on the past to dwell.

But where is now the Red Man of the vale,
 Before whose wild halloo the children quail,
 Whose heritage we hold, while all around
 Only the tracings of the past are found,
 Those hero chieftains of our earlier dreams,
 Whose names are on our hills, and on our streams,
 Fading away before their pale-faced foe,
 Where are they now?—and whither shall they go?
 From yonder hill could he but gaze around,
 Waving with harvests on his hunting ground,
 The iron track has blotted out his trail,
 The iron Engine steaming down the vale,
 His wigwam hamlet, and the forest grove,
 Whence rose his worship, to the God above,
 Great Spirit of the cloud, and of the air,
 The white man builds *his* house of worship there.
 Call him not savage, that he died to save,
 Like those we love, the land his fathers gave—
 The land held sacred to his father's God,
 His father's house, his father's burial sod.
 Peace to the Red Man then, where'er he roam—
 God grant him peace, and hunting grounds, and home.

'Tis said, no noble thought, nor kindly word,
 Nor deed of love, which once the heart hath stirred,
 Can fail or die,—but, strengthening day by day,
 While those who wrought, in silence pass away,
 Moves on from heart to heart, from shore to shore,
 A blessing, and a boon, forevermore.
 And so, while we with deep-felt reverence turn,
 Towards that sacred spot which doth inurn
 Our fathers' dust, and consecrate, with tears,
 These hallowed memories of those earlier years,
 We, too, will make our own, where'er we rove,
 Their high heroic faith, and deeds of love,
 And gathering here, around their burial sod,
 Re-vow their vows to freedom, and to God.

A hundred years,—behold the change of time !
Our fathers, whom the past hath made sublime,
Saw not in dreams, what is but history now,
Hallowed by blood-bought freedom's sacred vow ;
Hallowed by toil, and hope, and faith, and prayer ;
Wrought by the men whose dust lies sleeping there.
Marching to freedom's conflict, when it came,
They fought the unequal fight, unknown to fame,
Or pomp, or power, unfurnished, and unfed,
Scarce caring whither freedom's banner led ;
For well they knew, 'twas victory or doom,
A rescued country, or a felon's tomb.
The fight they won. And well the gift they gave
Their sons have kept—the land they died to save.
And freedom's gift, so dedicate with tears,
Again they rescued—when in after years,
Reckless, the slaves of slavery sought its fall,
And gave, to rescue it, *their* life, *their* all.
And it was rescued. And in deed, and name,
Those heroes, too, are demi-gods of fame.
Pride of the nations, stands that country now,
With freedom's laurels on her youthful brow,
Hope of the nations, in her youthful sway ;
Guide of the nations, to the better way.
The long dark day of human serfdom o'er ;
No slave, Columbia, treads thy farthest shore,
Swept by two oceans ; thou art still the same;
Upon thy shield no blot, thy flag no stain.
From shore to shore, with peace and plenty crowned,
Thy hills, and groves are consecrated ground ;
Thy *future* none can tell, nor what shall be ;
Thy *proud, triumphant past*, is *History*.

The reading of the Poem was frequently interrupted by bursts of applause. When it was finished a song by the Norwich Glee Club was sung ; at the conclusion of which the President introduced to the audience Mr. COOK ST. JOHN, from the adjoining town of Walton, who had just entered upon his rooth year, a venerable relic of a past generation. Presently there were standing by his side upon the platform, his son, T. S. ST. JOHN, aged 75 ; his grandson, WILLIAM ST. JOHN, aged 50 ; his great-grandson, GEORGE ST. JOHN, aged 26, and his great-great-grand-son, BENJAMIN ST. JOHN, aged 5 years, and each of them the first born of his family ; all apparently healthy and vigorous.

This strange and remarkable incident created a sensation that ran through and pervaded the whole assembly, and a strong desire was expressed that the Patriarch would speak to the people, even though limited to a few words only. He hesitated, but being urged and encouraged by the kind and assuring words of the President, he moved with a firm step to the front of the platform, and addressed the audience substantially as follows:

"My Friends:

I am glad to be able to see you to-day. I was ninety-nine years old on the first day of this month. I suppose you would like to know how it is that I am so well at my age. I will tell you. I have been a laboring man, a carpenter, and have always worked, and in this way I have been blessed with health and during my life have had all that I needed. If you young people want to be healthy and strong you must work, for in no other way can you be sure of it, and of being good and useful men and women."

The speech was listened to with marked attention and seemed to be regarded as very much to the point in these latter days. It was vociferously applauded.

There also appeared upon the platform, by invitation from the committee, other aged persons whom the President courteously presented to the audience, viz: PATRY THAYER—now Mrs. DALEY—aged 86, and who taught a school for small children at Sidney Plains, then a mere hamlet, in 1804, and NICHOLAS J. SLUYTER, of the same age, maternally descended from DOMINIE JOHNSTON; and a Mr. RAYMOND, aged ninety-four. At this point in the proceedings, a call to dinner was announced, and a recess was taken to 2 o'clock P. M.

THE DINNER.

The hour for dinner having arrived, the President stated to the assembly that all would be provided with dinner, (he had been so informed by the committee) but the problem to him was, how so many could be fed? Said he, "The day of miracles is past; and yet here is a multitude to whom the invitation is extended, *come and eat*. We must all be patient though, and in

good time I have reason to believe that all will be provided for. It will be necessary to discriminate a little, just now, and I am requested to state that the invited guests and persons over 70 years of age, will first be provided with tickets that will admit them to the dinner tent. There are enough of these persons, I suppose, to fill the tables; but in a short time the invitation will be renewed, and all will be made welcome to the Centennial dinner."

As rapidly as possible tickets were issued to those entitled, and directly the tables were filled to their utmost capacity. The dinner tent was 100 feet in diameter, and the whole floor of the tent was provided with tables and seats, leaving only sufficient room between for those who wished to pass and wait upon the guests. Besides the invited guests, it was estimated that over 100 persons, past seventy years of age, were seated at the first table.

The Norwich *Telegraph*, speaking of the dinner, says: "The dinner tent was a place of considerable interest, by one o'clock, to the waiting multitude. Long tables were loaded with every variety of good things, and to these immediate attention was given. On every hand there were substantials, such as hungry people would covet, followed by coffee, tea, and half a dozen varieties of dessert; and to make the feast doubly welcome, the tables were surrounded by the good ladies of Sidney Plains, who seemed to know just what everybody wanted. If others had provided a feast of reason in the other tent, *they* had prepared one which called out the admiration and thanks of all who sat down to it."

Another journal says: "The dinner, which was prepared and served in the tent, was a repast, showing that those getting up the celebration were not lacking in good taste and liberality. Tickets were issued to more than 150 persons over 70 years of age, and more than a thousand free dinners were served." Again, and yet again, were the tables filled, and yet the supply was abundant; and even those who came last had no reason to complain that they were not bountifully provided for.

THE AFTER DINNER TALK.

At about two o'clock, the President having called to order ; gentlemen representing their several towns were invited to address the assembly. But little difference could be detected in the numbers which gathered in the afternoon. The tent was full of quiet, interested listeners, as in the morning; and for nearly two hours the audience remained quietly seated, listening to various historical reminiscences, interspersed here and there with music from the Band or singing by the Glee Club. A full report of these after dinner speeches cannot now be given, though some of the gentlemen have kindly furnished us what we expected to have had through the medium of a reporter. The persons making speeches were : G. W. REYNOLDS, Esq., and Col. W. W. SNOW, of Oneonta, Hon. EBENEZER BLAKELEY, of Otego, Dr. E. ODELL, of Unadilla, Hon. W. S. SAYRE, of Bainbridge, P. P. ROGERS, Esq., of Binghamton, I. S. NEWTON, Esq., of Norwich, and Hon. STEPHEN B. LEONARD, of Owego.

The town of Unadilla being called, Dr. E. ODELL responded :

DR. ODELL'S RESPONSE.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I regret that some gentleman, better acquainted with the early history of the town of Unadilla than I am, is not here to speak for her. The records of the early settlers have only come down to the present generation in indefinite and disconnected items.

Unadilla was erected from Otsego in 1792, then embracing all the southern portion of the county.

Among the first settlers of Unadilla proper, were SOLOMON MARTIN, DANIEL BISSELL, DR. GORDON HUNTINGTON and ABIJAH BEACH.

Settlement must have been in progress when the town was organized, and probably commenced as early as 1788.

DANIEL BISSELL kept a hotel in 1798. SOLOMON MARTIN kept the first store. He was elected to the State legislature in 1800,

and again in 1802. GORDON HUNTINGTON was a member in 1805, 1806, 1807, and in 1808.

Slowly but steadily these hardy men opened the valley to civilization. It was a work of Herculean labor, to remove the giant pines, to clear the swampy grounds of underbrush, and to fit the soil for the plow and harrow. Men are yet living who remember the spot where the railroad buildings are located as a tangled thicket, from which the cry of the panther and howl of the wolf were frequently heard.

Such men were not to be discouraged by want, nor intimidated by danger. Possessing strong self-reliance and indomitable energy, the pioneers of this valley proved themselves worthy sons of the Pilgrim Fathers. Few in numbers, yet firm in resolution and united in purpose, they subdued the forest, organized the school, established the church and brought the comforts and conveniences of civilized life to repay them for privations sustained and hardships endured.

Perhaps no subject is more worthy of record in the annals of our town than the Unadilla Hunt, organized about the year 1820. Here, for five consecutive years, assembled for sports of the chase the most prominent men of the country from a distance of sixty miles. There came from Chenango Col. JAMES CLAPP, Gen. RANSOM RATHBONE, Judge ROBERT MONELL, Gen. PETER SKEN SMITH, Hon. SIMON G. THROOP, Hon. JOHN C. CLARK, Col. MOSES G. BENJAMIN; from Oneida county, Messrs. DEVEREAUX, LANSING, GRISWOLD, HENRY R. STORRS, and MORRIS S. MILLER; from Otsego, Judge JOHN COX MORRIS, Col. SPARKWEATHER, Hon. LEVI BEARDSLEY, JOSEPH MILLER, Esq., and others; Hon. SHERMAN PAGE, Hon. HENRY OGDEN and Dr. JOHN COLWELL, of Unadilla, were also members of the Hunt.

Assembling in November, they generally marshalled for the sport on a Tuesday, which continued until Friday. From eighteen to twenty-five deer were not unfrequently captured during the week, and piled in the hall of the hotel (Hunters' Hall) as trophies of their success.

Mr. Ogden was a distinguished advocate, and though younger

than many, was noted for his splendid talents, as well as for his ardent passion for hunting and fishing. Hon Sherman Page, the "Grand Sachem," was the mighty Nimrod and rightful hero of the party. His sparkling wit, his keen sense of the ludicrous, his inimitable powers of delineation, his retentive memory,—all contributed to render him one of the most interesting men of his day.

Of this gallant array of worthies, probably none now survive, unless it be Simon G. Throop, who, a few years ago, at the age of eighty, was appointed Judge of one of the district courts of Pennsylvania.

But the stately buck no longer roams over the hills of Otsego. Occasionally a stray wanderer is brought down by the deadly aim of the solitary hunter in remote parts of Delaware county. When a few years more are added to the century, the termination of which we now celebrate, these once proud natives of the forest will be known only in story.

We recall with melancholy pleasure the times of our fathers. Their heroic deeds, their persevering industry, their temperate, moral and religious lives are eminently worthy of commemoration; and I hazard the assertion that, when another centennial is celebrated, as I trust it may be, the records brought together to-day will awaken an interest not fully appreciated by this generation.

RESPONSE OF HON. W. S. SAYRE.

Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Committee:

Although I had not the slightest idea that I should be called upon, or have occasion to say anything at this time; yet, inasmuch as it appears, by some accident, that there is no other one to respond for the town of Bainbridge, and you have done me the honor to call on me for that purpose, I cannot refrain from expressing the great gratification I have felt in witnessing the very interesting performances on this occasion, and I should be derelict in duty to the people of my town if I permitted them to ignore, or be indifferent to this exceedingly interesting celebration. I know there are hosts of the most worthy and intelligent

inhabitants of Bainbridge present, and listening with deep interest and attention ; and I am confident that I do not misrepresent them when I say, that they have been highly entertained by the able and learned address of the Orator of the Day, and the smoothly flowing numbers of the eloquent Poet. And I take this occasion to express our high sense of the appropriate, liberal and unselfish manner in which the residents of Sidney Plains have got up and conducted this celebration. They deserve much credit for conceiving the idea. And Sidney Plains is eminently and decidedly the spot on which such a celebration for this whole valley should be held. We, in this region, have reason also to be thankful for the generous manner in which the former residents of this little hamlet, most of whom first saw the light here, have responded to this call. They have come from the cities and villages, and prairies of the far West ; from the banks of the Hudson, and from old Steuben and Broome ; ministers, lawyers, doctors and merchants, who have earned for themselves *honorable* names in their distant homes, and have returned to the scenes of their childhood, to contribute by their wit and eloquence and poetry to the enjoyment of this most rare and unique gathering of the descendants of those who cast their lot in this lonely vale 100 years ago.

Though I was not to the *valley* born, and have no claims to the honors of this occasion, yet I was grafted among the early settlers of the Susquehanna "long, long ago," and have had many opportunities of appreciating the sterling qualities of the fathers and grandfathers of many around me ; and I have been fortunate in having enjoyed the friendship and confidence from boyhood of your orator, and many others on this platform. Hence I have felt a deep interest in the proceedings at this time, and am highly gratified to find them a complete success.

If, Mr. President, I have been expected, because I have attempted to respond for Bainbridge, to give any account of her early history, the time of her settlement, or the trials and hardships of her early settlers, I must confess I am an entire failure. I can only say that Bainbridge was settled soon after Sidney

Plains, to-wit, nearly one hundred years ago, and was called Jericho; that the first settlers were much such hardy pioneers and worthy men as your eloquent orator has represented his fore-fathers, the first settlers of these lovely plains of Sidney, to have been.

But, Mr. President, I will not prevent my little impromptu address from having *one* quality of a *good speech*, that is, *brevity*. I therefore close by thanking you and the audience for your kind attention during the few moments I have attempted to interest you.

THE SPEECH OF PERRY P. ROGERS, ESQ.

Mr. President:

Native and to *this* manner born, I feel no little embarrassment in being called upon to respond for the city of Binghamton, where I am scarcely more than a "carpet-bagger."

Early in the day I saw here one of the oldest and ablest citizens of Binghamton, a man remarkable for his eloquence, and who, a half century since, was a participant with those "Mighty Hunters" who made the "Oxford Chase" famous for its feasts of reason; who, in ordinary conversation,

"Pours out as he goes,
A stream of transparent and forcible prose—"

And whose speeches always instruct and improve. And I had anticipated a rare intellectual treat from him to-day. I am sorry to learn that he has left us, and that you and I shall be deprived of the pleasure of listening to Hon. John Clapp.

I see also before me Hon. W. B. Edwards, a descendant of the Rev. Jonathan of that ilk—County Judge and Surrogate of Broome county. I suppose that, by the expiration of his official career, he will be able to give the world a treatise on "Wills," as useful if not as profound, as that of his distinguished ancestor; while as County Judge he will see so much of the innate "cussedness" of humanity—counsel, clients and witnesses, that he will, on the subject of "Total Depravity," be as orthodox as the great President himself.

But Judge Edwards is a modest man, and declines to speak,

and as a last resort, I suppose, I must ; for Binghamton, the city of the valley, shall not go unrepresented on this occasion.

Seated at the confluence of the Chenango with your own Susquehanna, Binghamton is like some floral queen of May-day festivities. With a growth, healthy and permanent, if not rapid, she is the center to which a large section of country gravitates. An important railroad center, she is destined to yet larger growth and expansion. As the home of the lamented Dickinson, she will be the Mecca of those who honor great talents, true patriotism, and inflexible integrity.

She has large and beautiful churches, so many that a carping resident of the State of *Camden and Amboy* once said to me, that there were more churches according to the number of Christians in Binghamton than in any other place he was ever in. But we must make due allowance for the spleen of Jerseymen. We boast of our public schools and school buildings. In our borders is located that great benevolent institution designed to restore the inebriate to his pristine manhood; an honor to our city and to the Empire State. But above all, we boast of our railway station, which is unsurpassed, and unsurpassable by any similar structure on the face of the globe. It has more and stronger odors than are ascribed to Cologne, while for ancient and fish-like smells, it can beat the pool of Trinculo, and give fifty on the string and discount at that. Antiquarians differ as to the era of its probable construction ; some supposing it to have been erected during the Revolutionary struggle, while others, with more plausibility, refer its erection to the Northmen who preceded Columbus to the virgin soil of this New World. I shall not attempt to decide, but say of the building as Webster said of the old Bay State, "There she stands. Look at her!"

But other than satirical and boastful words become us to-day. It is well amid the ~~turmoil~~ and din, and feverish excitement of the present, to look back to the times and the men, in whose dangers, toils and sacrifices were the possibilities of to-day.

Among the patriarchs here to-day I am a young man, yet I can remember Witter and Hugh Johnston, who may not inap-

propriately be called the Romulus and Remus of this valley. I remember many others of the pioneers of this vicinity, Spencers, Burches, Keeches, Thorntons, Eastwoods, Morgans and Mersereaux; men whom the nations of antiquity would have made heroes and demi-gods; men who took part in our Revolutionary struggle, and whose ancestral traditions ran back to the "Old French War."

From these, in early childhood, I received many legends; moving incidents of flood and field, tales of suffering and privations of which the people of this day can have hardly a conception; sufferings, privations and hardships not exceeded by those of the wolf nurtured founders of Rome.

And where are these heroes to-day? Go to the various burial grounds around us—

"There, in their narrow beds securely laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep."

In God's acre their bodies rest,

"And their souls are with the Lord, we trust."

We do well to celebrate this day, and we honor ourselves in honoring the pioneers of this valley. Let us cherish their memories; revere their virtues. The wilderness and solitary place were glad because of them; they caused the desert to blossom like the rose; they labored, and we are to-day reaping the rewards of their industry. And the voices of "millions yet to be" shall pronounce their benediction.

In conclusion, I move you, sir, that when this meeting adjourn, it adjourn to meet at this place on the 13th of June, 1972.

This resolution having been seconded, was put and unanimously carried.

At the close of the preceding address an unsuccessful call was made for some one to speak for the neighboring county of Chenango. The President remarked that speeches and reminiscences were still in order, and he trusted some one would soon be found to answer the call just made. That the after dinner addresses thus far had contributed largely to the interest of the occasion. Continuing, he said: "The presence of Col. Snow, of

Oneonta, recalls to my mind the fact that when the large pines of this valley were being manufactured into lumber, which was rafted and floated upon this river (from 1808 to 1826) to the markets at and near to tide water, that the gentleman's town was not only the head of navigation, but the residence of a distinguished Pilot, PETER BUNDY, the Admiral of the River. Many of you must remember his gigantic frame and stately form. I will not undertake to state his height or weight, but he stood many inches above six feet, and could not have weighed less than 260 pounds, probably much more. Who will dare to say that the valley had not a giant in those days? It is no marvel that Oneonta was then better known as "Clip Knockie," in view of its belligerent possibilities—and practices, perhaps. Albeit, PETER BUNDY was a quiet, peaceable and orderly citizen.

The representative who speaks for Binghamton, has, with much truth, no doubt, represented his town as being distinguished for its rapid advance in high art and culture, and most especially for its preëminence as a *city of churches*. This is in such marked contrast with the condition of things that existed there "within the memory of men still living," that I can hardly resist the temptation to repeat Mr. JOHN A. COLLIER's account of the first settlement of a minister of the Gospel in that town, then known as Chenango Point. A missionary to the Indians in the far west, had been sent out by a Christian Association from Massachusetts. On his way, the minister's horse became somewhat dilapidated, and when he reached the Point he halted a few days for repairs. While so detained he took a survey of the hamlet and its inhabitants and on an intervening Sunday, gathered some of the settlers together for religious worship. On winding up his discourse, he announced to his hearers that although he was commissioned to preach the Gospel to the Indians, yet he had looked the ground over and had made up his mind to remain where he was. That if Chenango Point, and the moral and religious necessities of its people were not technically within the letter of his commission, it was entirely clear to his mind that they were within *itz spirit*, and he should go no farther. Thus, my friends, we see it illustrated in the moral as in the vegetable

kingdom, that remarkably large and "tall oaks occasionally grow from rather small acorns."

At this time, MR. ISAAC S. NEWTON, of Norwich, N. Y., was discovered to have entered the tent, and the President invited him to the stand, to speak for Chenango county.

Coming forward, Mr. NEWTON excused himself, saying that the descending sun reminded him that this audience had for six hours been listening to speeches, essays, histories, music, etc., uninterrupted, save an hour, while discussing the viands at the adjoining tent, and, as he had not the privilege of hearing what had been said, having come to and been up the valley on a professional engagement, just closed, he knew not where to begin, or what to say, and barely knew the object of the meeting; but as cries of "go on" arose from all parts of the tent, he proceeded to say:

SPEECH OF MR. NEWTON.

Well, Mr. President and friends, if I occupy a few moments indulge me with the remembrance that this call is unexpected, and that I came here on another errand, and not to share in these pleasant memories; and so, if what I say is crude, heavy, or a repetition, charge it to the circumstances.

You ask me, sir, to speak for Chenango county. Chenango county lies yonder and speaks for herself to-day. The sober industry of her citizen farmers; the white farm-houses, with their ample out-buildings, that mark and adorn her every hillside and valley; the ninety church spires in her hamlets, with the worshiping people in each, and her ninety Sabbath-schools; the school-houses, in which are taught a larger portion of her children than in any other county in the State save one; these speak for her as I cannot speak.

None here have wandered so far to the East or to the West, but that the name and fame of "Old Chenango" has been there too.

As I came to your town in the cars this morning, I said to myself, how changed is this valley in a century! If the first settler who planted his cabin (a *century plant* of wonderful growth

and blossom) on yonder bank an hundred years ago to-day, could rise, and view the landscape, how would he exclaim at the change of scenes about him : the clearing for the open pasture ; the stumpy field for the smooth meadow, or grain-land ; the log cabin for the stately mansion ; the rough log road for the smooth highway, and the gliding railway.

Has it ever occurred to you, favored citizens of this valley, that this tent is in the center of one of the finest gardens of the world ? Look at the strip of land one hundred miles wide, north and south, and twice that length ; the butter region. It has not its equal anywhere. We stand here, a quarter of a mile above the sea. The summit of yonder hill is a quarter of a mile above us. These elevations represent the lowest and highest of the lands of this dairy plat. Cool springs and running brooks water every farm. Drive back the forest from these highest hill tops, and at once a thick carpet of grass covers the whole. Not an acre of these lands is barren. Not a rocky slope, nor a field of stunted evergreens can be seen in all this dairy region. Go south, north, east or west, at home, or in foreign lands, and the bare rock or stunted shrub mark such highlands. To this you owe the liberal pay you receive for the products of your dairy. But the smile of this dairy-woman at my left, tells me that she thinks that it is her art that makes her dairy famous in yonder metropolis. Ah, try it ; go out of this garden belt, and my word for it, your hand will have lost much of its cunning.

To the young men here, who have been listening to the call, "young man go West," let me bid you stay at your homesteads, and cultivate them to their highest power of production, for the grass is a sure crop every year, while the grain field is exposed to the frost, the blast, the drought, the mildew, and the thousand other chances.

The first settler; arising, would stare wildly at our railways. Five years ago this summer, the railway crossed yonder bridge, and, for the first time, the engine's whistle sounded in Chenango. To-day, that county, nestled among the hills, has more length of railway than any other in the State.

And here the croaker tells us we are building in this country too fast. Look out with me on the landscape before us, up and down this valley, and up the sides of those Delaware hills. See the smooth, hard-beaten highways crossing in every direction ; see the clean fields, and the fenced farms. Who built the roads, cleared and fenced the farms, and gave them to this generation as a legacy ? It was these gray-haired fathers, sitting at my right hand and my left on this platform, and their compeers "now rested from their labors."

They built these highways, and cleared the fields, and that, too, before the mower and the reaper, the horse-rake and the thrasher, and the numerous other *helps* of to-day made it easy to raise and gather their food from among the roots and stumps ; when the spinning-wheel and loom and other slow processes made their raiment.

Half the cost of these highways and clearings would build a railroad through every town in the land. Why, then, shall this generation not build them ? Who shall say we are building too much until every village and hamlet shall have its road.

Though not a native of this valley, sir, I have one vivid early recollection of it. My parents, a little over two score years ago, spent two summers in a railroad shanty on the mountain south of us, in Pennsylvania, building the first railroad on which steam was used in America. They took me, a three-year-old, along as a *sub.* Our shanty had no room for such furniture as a looking-glass. On our return north, we passed a night at the home of a friend in yonder town of Windsor, down this river. After tea, a bright fire in the parlor showed, at good advantage, a large mirror. I was bound to go through it into the other room ; not the less so, because I saw a strange boy there struggling to come at me, and I was ready to try his mettle ; in fact, desired to. A mother's hand on my collar failed to prevent kicks and screams. But she stopped me. She taught me one of my early lessons there, down this valley. I remember it. I remember how it was done. It was a practical lesson. My mother did not use Valerian then. That was not what she gave me. I took something else.

But here, sir, let me drop a tribute, on this occasion, to a friend, who is a native of this valley and now living. I wish he was here, to-day, sharing with us these festivities, and himself telling you what his life has been. I refer to my classmate and friend, Dr. Henry S. West.

As I came under this tent, Mr. President, I heard you say, that a missionary, as the report went, on his way to the Indians, encamped for the night at "Old Chenango Point," now the city of Binghamton, and, from the profanity and whisky he heard and saw there, decided he had reached his true mission, and settled. I believe, sir, that Dr. West is a direct descendant of that *sin-struck* missionary. If not, he ought to have been. Born and reared at Binghamton, he there commenced practice as a physician. We remember him as a college student, beloved by all, modest, unassuming, yet excelling in every line of study. Like modesty and skill marked his practice. A call was made for Christian physicians to go out as missionaries. The Dr. after ten years' practice, with the "Good-by" and "God bless you" of his aged parents to their only son, took his young wife and went to Asia Minor to practice, and at the same time tell to the men where Paul preached, the same "glad tidings."

Skillful in surgery, his fame soon spread far and wide, and, now, the suffering travel hundreds of miles to avail themselves of his help. Few, in any land, are his peers, to-day, as surgeons. The exaggerated stories of the East give to him superhuman credit. For instance, the papers published and the people believed, that he took out a woman's diseased heart, cut away dead portions from it, replaced the rest, and in time sent the sufferer home happy and well.

Sir, when next you visit "Old Chenango Point," look out upon the tall spires of the city, pointing heavenward from her ample, costly, graceful churches, and upon her other public edifices, and you will say that from the early *planting* of that missionary in good Susquehanna Valley soil, grew a splendid crop of missionaries, churches, schools; that he was the right man in the right place.

One thought more, suggested by this *Century Plant*, my friends, and I will relieve your patience.

The world is growing better. Don't shake your heads, my veteran friends of three-score and four-score years. Not an old man, my whitening locks tell me that I am beginning to descend toward the sunset of life. On the quiet, placid stream of life's evening we look at the gay, joyous, and it may be, boisterous young, and mourn that the rigid virtues of our own early life are departing, and that everything is going toward the bad. Do we not overlook, or forget, the gay and joyous part of our own early life, and, perchance, its follies and waywardness, too ?

I love to believe the world is growing better. Average life is longer than it was. Why? Is it not that men are more careful of the body? Our colleges, our academies, our common schools are better; are improving. Knowledge, and the means of knowledge, increase on every hand. Material ties are binding us, man to his fellow-man, more closely on every side. Every day new ways and measures are invented, and put in practice, to relieve suffering of every kind. The orphan, the blind, the aged, the fallen, the criminal, the unfortunate of every class and of every land, are sought out and cared for. Great charities are reaching out strong hands of helpfulness. The school is placed within the reach of every child; the Bible in the hands of every man. The terrors of war are softened by the kind, impartial offices of charity following in its direct wake. National crimes are dying out in the sunlight of a higher knowledge. Slavery is vanishing from the world. Liberty of conscience, and liberty of person, is increasing in every land. Despotic thrones are tottering to the fall. Corruption in public, private, and corporate life, the natural outgrowth of the irregularities and excesses of our terrible war, is held up for the scorn of man; and the knife of investigation is being used without mercy, and the corrupt mighty are falling. Stern war has taught us how every man has need of the help of his fellow-man, and made us mutually respect and honor all of every rank or class.

And to-day, sir, on the shores of the beautiful Lake of Geneva sits a tribunal with power to arbitrate between two of the

mightiest and most cultured nations of the earth a *casus belli* that once could only have been solved by a bloody appeal to arms.

Reason is on the throne, *and the country growing better*. An hundred years hence, and—but I forbear. It needs a prophet's eye.

Let every man, in his place, day by day, do his daily duty, and all shall be well.

Thanking you for your kind indulgence, I bid you a hearty good day.

THE LETTERS.

The President announced that the Secretary, Mr. Hardy, would now proceed to read the letters which the Home Committee had received from some of our friends abroad, who were unable to share with us in person, the festivities of the day. That first in order would be the letter of an honored and greatly esteemed son of the valley, whose very name was a synonym of integrity; who never deserved an enemy and, so far as is known, never had one: Deacon Hugh C. Johnston. The President added: "Fifty-four and fifty-five years ago he was our village school-master, and such was our respect for his knowledge and wisdom, that of him, as of Goldsmith's ideal of that important functionary, it may be said:

"And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,
How one small head could carry all he knew."

The several letters were then read, as follows:

LETTER FROM HUGH C. JOHNSTON, ESQ.

"CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA, June 7, 1872.

To the Centennial Celebration Committee:

DEAR FRIENDS,—I am in receipt of your kind invitation to attend the celebration in commemoration of the settlement of Sidney Plains, 100 years ago. Mrs. Johnston and myself regret we cannot be with you, but age and infirmities must prevent our attendance. We shall, notwithstanding, feel a deep interest in the day and the occasion, all which must awaken tender recollections of the past. Oft have I listened with thrilling interest to my dear father's recital of the privations and discouragements of those who settled the Susquehanna Valley, in that locality. It is just and proper that the day and the occasion should be commemorated. For more than three score years I was identified with its interests.

In the providence of God I am separated from you, but find no place so dear to me as my early home. Many are the changes time has wrought since my early recollection. There I spent my infancy, childhood and mature years.

Imagination often carries me back to the scenes of early life, but I fear it will be only in *imagination*. I often think of childhood's days, when with dear brothers and sisters we were an unbroken circle around our dear parents' hearthstone.

I remember with pleasurable emotions, my connection with the Sabbath School for forty years, and the dear ones in attendance; of my union with the Church of Christ, and those who composed it, more than three score years ago.

I think of the old church with its high pulpit, and square pews, and of their occupants; of solemn warnings, of the messages of love and the songs of praise that echoed within its walls; of the happy days I there enjoyed with the dear companion of my youth, in receiving the caresses of our beloved children. Alas! six of them sleep in death.

I think of the many social gatherings in which, with my family, I then and there participated; of the venerated and beloved dead who sleep in that lonely cemetery.

A review of the past is calculated to awaken emotions, both pleasurable and painful. The review appears much like a dream; and now, at the age of almost four score years, I am admonished that my future of life must be short. May that God whose I am, and whom I have endeavored to serve, strengthen and sustain me under the increasing infirmities of advancing age.

Be assured while life lingers, I shall cherish the fond recollection of my old, old home. When the short-lived pleasures of this world are ended, may we be prepared to enjoy a happy future in the better life.

Please remember Mrs. Johnston and myself to our life-long friends who may join in the cetebration.

Sincerely yours,

H. C. JOHNSTON."

LETTER FROM JUDGE LONGYEAR.

"DETROIT, June 6, 1872.

Ira E. Sherman, Esq., and others, Committee:

MESSRS.—Please accept my thanks for your kind remembrance, and favoring me with an invitation to your proposed Centennial Celebration of the settlement of the Susquehanna Valley at Sidney Plains, 13th inst. I assure you it would afford me much more than ordinary pleasure to accept your kind invitation and revisit the scenes, and take by the hand the friends and acquaintances of my earlier life, and participate in the anticipated festivities. But it is not so to be. The U. S. Courts at this place, over which I am now presiding, are in active session, and will continue for probably a month to come, and it is therefore impossible for me to get away without material injury to the public service.

Please remember me kindly to all old friends and acquaintances, and accept for yourselves the sincere regards of

Yours very truly,

JNO. W. LONGYEAR."

LETTER FROM HON. HENRY R. MYGATT.

"OXFORD, June 13, 1872.

GENTLEMEN.—This morning a protracted trial in the Supreme Court, in which I am engaged, deprived me of the anticipated pleasure of being present as one of the representatives of the Chenango Valley at your centennial festival of to-day.

I regret extremely to say that a professional opponent from Onondaga will not consent that I unite with you in recalling the interesting events of a century ago, when an intrepid, hardy and industrious population commenced moving westward through the gates of the Susquehanna. They soon found their way to the beautiful Chenango.

"The Chenango to the Susquehanna runs,
The Susquehanna to the sea."

In your extended valley, in your hills, and plains, in your agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, are found the noblest elements for national glory. A century ago, the king of Great

Britain pursued the system of concentrating all power over these Colonies. Those were perilous times, and yet the patriot, Samuel Adams, never forgot to sound "the glorious spirit of liberty." The war whoop was then ringing, and the scalping knife gleaming ; but on this day of your jubilee not a son of the forest will disturb the civilization and liberty of the owners, settlers and occupants of your soil.

Whilst I thank you for your obliging invitation, you will allow me to offer to the public-spirited people of Sidney my cordial wishes for both the success of the occasion, and for their continued prosperity and welfare.

Very sincerely and faithfully your friend and servant,
HENRY R. MYGATT.

To IRA E. SHERMAN, ESQ., and others of the Committee."

LETTER FROM MR. CALVIN F. MILLS.

"NEW YORK, June 11, 1872.

Hon. Ira E. Sherman :

MY DEAR SIR,—Please, to yourself and the Committee, accept thanks for the invitation to join in celebrating the completion of the century since the settlement of the Upper Susquehanna valley.

Doubtless it presented rare beauty to the reverend pioneer, as under the fresh foliage he woke the echoes with the voice of prayer and praise ; the river rolled gloriously at his feet toward the far off ocean when it first reflected from its shining bosom the pale face of the settler.

'Tis many years since I last saw the quiet valley and the smiling faces of cherished friends and near relatives there. Many of those beloved now sleep beneath the grassy mounds near the village church. Since my last visit to my Mecca, you have wooed for her benefit, the progressive genius of the age. The locomotive shriek proclaims the victory of steam, and lightning messengers bring you into immediate connection with the American Metropolis and close relations with all the world. Enterprise and skill have reduced to hours the journeys of weeks, and bring damp to your hands the Metropolitan journals with fresh news from all quarters of the globe.

Pressure of daily duty precludes to me the great pleasure of joining in your jubilee. I would gladly survey the scene which charmed my childhood; more gladly press again warm hands that have given me many hearty greetings. Strong necessity forbids the enjoyment. Permit me to hope no cloud may mar your festivities; and that Sidney Plains, as a commercial center, may in its greater prosperity retain those public and private virtues which, during a hundred years, have been characteristic of her population.

Truly your friend and kinsman,

CALVIN J. MILLS"

LETTER FROM EPHRAIM LONGYEAR, ESQ.

"LANSING, MICH., June 4, 1872.

Ira E. Sherman, Esq., and others, Committee:

I have received your kind invitation to visit the Susquehanna Valley, and attend the Centennial Celebration of June 13th; and I should be greatly pleased to be there, but my business arrangements are such, that it will be impossible for me to do so. I wish to convey to you my sincere thanks for your kind remembrance of one who, in his boyhood, was a resident of the valley, and with which many of the pleasantest recollections of his early life are associated.

I visited Sidney Plains, after about 25 years' absence, and her valleys and green hillsides looked like the familiar faces of old friends, that brighten the eyes and cheer the heart to meet. Many of the old citizens had passed away, but some yet remained to welcome an old friend. I found that new life and vigor were infused into your once sequestered town by the railroad and telegraph, and that your hills and mountains were no longer a barrier to be surmounted by slow processes, in communicating with the rest of the world. Long may you live to enjoy your growing prosperity.

Allow me to join you in hoping that your celebration will be one of the most interesting ever held in the old valley, and that the occasion will be pleasant and entertaining. Though absent, consider me as one who would gladly be with you on that day at Sidney Plains!

Allow me, again, gentlemen, to thank you, and to subscribe myself one who well and pleasantly remembers the old Susquehanna Valley. E. LONGYEAR."

LETTER FROM DR. WILLIAM D. PURPLE.

"GREENE, May 10, 1872.

GENTLEMEN,—Your very kind invitation to participate in the Centennial Celebration of the settlement of your valley was duly received, for which accept my thanks. I am personally acquainted with Messrs. Rogers and McMaster, and would be happy to join in a celebration of the advent of their ancestors in your lovely valley. Your historic reminiscences will be highly interesting to me, who spent some six years in your valley, and who has an acquaintance with many of your older inhabitants. The Indian history of the valley, and the advent of Gen. Jas. Clinton's bateaux in August, 1779, on his way to Cayuga Lake to destroy the Indian crops; and the very interesting interview of Gen. Herkimer and Brant under the foliage of some of your native trees, will be scenes worthy of the orator and the poet on that occasion.

My health is not very good, and I am invited to give a public lecture at Sherburne on the 11th of June before the Chenango County Medical Society, and shall be unable to do myself the honor to be in your midst. Yours truly and kindly,

W. D. PURPLE.

Hon. I. E. SHERMAN and others, Committee."

At the setting of the sun, which had shone serenely upon the day's proceedings ~~thus far~~, a recess of a couple of hours was announced; exercises to be again resumed at the church.

EVENING EXERCISES.

The exercises in the evening were held in the Congregational Church; the services being opened by the Rev. Mr. Robertson, reading of the Scriptures and prayer. A fine selection was rendered by the choir, after which the Rev. J. B. Morse read the following sketch of the church at Sidney, principally found in the church records:

THE FIRST RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF SIDNEY.

The church in Sidney did not commence with the settlement. This valley was not settled, like some parts of the West, by a colony, who take with them all the conveniences and institutions of older settlements,—the mechanic, merchant, schoolmaster and minister. The settlement was a small germ to begin with, and grew slowly.

It was thirty-six years after the first settlement, before the first Church of Christ in Sidney was constituted. We are not to suppose, however, that the early settlers were willingly without the stated means of grace, or that they were wholly deprived of this blessing.

Occasionally an itinerating missionary would find his way into the valley and preach to the sparse settlements scattered up and down the river. At quite an early date, the church was formed in Bainbridge, which, in a measure, became the spiritual center for a large section of country, including a part of Sidney.

The Rev. Joel Chapin, who was pastor in Bainbridge from 1798 to 1806, considered Sidney as belonging to his parish, and preached a part of the time here. It is recorded in his diary, that after he closed his labors with the church in Bainbridge, he preached a part of his time, from 1808 to 1812, in Sidney, and labored in a revival during that time. He speaks of the people in Sidney with great esteem and love. He records that he preached in the meeting-house at Sidney in 1812, "to a full and solemn assembly."

Through the instrumentality of Mr. Chapin, more than any other human agency; a council was called on the 12th day of January, 1808, to constitute a church in this place. *I cannot do better than to give the record entire, as it was made at the time:*

"At a council called and convened at Sidney, January 12, 1808, for the purpose of examining, and, if thought proper, to

constitute a church in this place, there were present: Revs. Joel Chapin, David Harrower and Wm. Bull; Archibald Bassett, Moderator, and Joel T. Benedict, Clerk."

Joel Chapin was at that time living in Bainbridge; David Harrower was an itinerating missionary living at Hamden, and preaching a part of the time in Sidney; Rev. Archibald Bassett was the pastor of the Congregational Church in Walton; Rev. Wm. Bull was a wandering preacher, preaching where he chanced to be.

"The council opened with prayer. The following persons presented themselves, and after a *careful* examination of their doctrinal and experimental qualifications, they were considered as qualified to be constituted into a visible Church of Christ; namely: Israel Smith and Elizabeth his wife; Samuel Rogers and Sarah his wife; Israel Smith, Jr.; Enos Goodman and Esther his wife; Darius Smith and Lydia his wife; Samuel Bixby and Hannah his wife; David McMaster; Simeon Elmer and Hannah his wife; Solomon Farnham and Sally his wife; Elijah Bryan; Peter Bradley and Phebe his wife; Talcott Gould and Anna his wife; Hezekiah Wells; Polly Taylor; Jane Johnston; Jemima Judd, and Lydia Johnston; in all 26.

Voted that the council do proceed to constitute a church in this place, composed of the foregoing persons, to-morrow, at 10 o'clock A. M. Voted that Mr. Benedict make the prayer, Mr. Bassett preach the sermon, Mr. Chapin make the concluding prayer.

JAN. 13.—Met according to adjournment. Council opened with prayer.

The candidates voted that they were satisfied with the sentiments and qualifications of each other.

The existing confession of faith and covenant were read, examined and adopted. The council and the candidates then repaired to the place of public worship" (which, as the memory of a living witness supplies, was an upper room in the house at present occupied by Mr. Weir, but which was then kept as a public house by Mr. David Smith).

"The Rev. Joel T. Benedict opened the meeting with prayer. Rev. Archibald Basset preached the sermon from Ps cxxxvii: 5, 6: 'If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.'

The church was then constituted and considered as bearing the name of, the first Church of Christ in Sidney. Concluded with prayer by Rev. Joel Chapin. Joel T. Benedict, Clerk."

On the same day the church made choice of two deacons: Israel Smith and Enos Goodman.

The confession of faith and covenant, which now follow in the minutes, and which we cannot quote, were, in those days, considered short and simple; to our modern notions, they were long, elaborate and strong. Those who believed and confessed them on that far-off day, as the charter members of this church, have long since been gathered to their fathers, and with them the majority of the congregation that listened to that constituting sermon. The children that witnessed with interested curiosity, or solemn thoughts, the ceremonies of the day, have passed away, or live among us, or in other communities, as old men and women.

The first year of the church's existence, under the pastoral labors of Rev. David Harrower, was a year of great prosperity. During the year there were added 35 new members, making in all 61.

A few extracts from the records of the church during the first two years of its existence, cannot fail of interest to many who are present, as they must awaken many solemn and tender recollections:

"JAN. 24, 1808.—Berthena and Aurilie, children of Uzial Taylor, were baptized." This is the first record made by the newly constituted church; and if I were now preaching, I should say a good record to make, and one we are neglecting too much. The second is like unto it.

"FEB. 2, 1808.—Rena, Lynda, Israel, Eber, Polly, Rufus,

Eiihu, Otis and Electa, children of Israel Smith, Jr., were baptized.

FEB. 22, 1808.—Cyrus and David, children of David McMaster, were baptized.

MARCH 20, 1808.—The church proceeded to the examination of Lois Bixby and Betsy Redfield, and after examination, voted to receive them.”

The same day, March 20th, the following persons were received into the church, viz.: Witter Johnston, Lois Johnston, Mary Johnston, Anna Johnston, Peter Sliter, Simeon Smith, David Bradley, Sturgis L. Bradley, Francis Stoyell, Mary Baxter, Electa Smith, Rena Smith, Polly Sliter, Hepsibah Smith, Betsy Redfield and Lois Bixby ; and Betsy Redfield was baptized.

This was the first acquisition to the church. A few of them are still living, and still members of the church with which they first united.

“APRIL 3, 1808.—The following persons united with the church: Nicholas Sliter, Hugh C. Johnston, Content Bryan, Polly Bryan, Ruth Palmer and Betsy Hickock.”

Passing many records that no doubt are interesting to those who remember the names and incidents, we find recorded May 20th, 1808: “This church voted to form a union with the Northern Associated Presbytery, which union was effected at the session of Presbytery at Hartwick, the 8th of June.” The same year the delegate from the Sidney church was Col. Witter Johnston.

“MAY 29, 1808.—Jabez John and Wm. Henry (now known as Henry W.), children of Samuel Rogers, were baptized.

AUG. 18, 1808.—Abner, child of Hugh Johnston, was baptized.

JANUARY, 1809.—Le~~o~~, Henry, Nancy, John, Charles, Edgar, Frederick, William and Thomas, children of Levi Baxter, were baptized.”

March 5, 1809, we have the following record: “The church went into the consideration of other members, occasionally communing with us, and came to the following resolution, viz:—We

do not wish to be understood to deny members of other churches occasionally communing with us, but we do not conceive it to be our duty to allow this practice with any one member more than one year." But we must pass on.

The present church edifice was raised as a meeting house in 1807. It was roofed that year, and clap-boarded the year following, but was not completed and dedicated until 1814.

The dedicatory sermon was preached by the Rev. Isaac Garvin, who was at the time pastor of the church, from Gen. xxviii : 17 : "How dreadful is this place. This is none other than the House of God." Allow me to quote from his most excellent sermon :

"Are you now prepared, in view of God, Angels and Men, to dedicate this house to its intended use and purpose? In testimony of our sincerity, let us all arise from our seats and dedicate this house.

Blessed God; Father, Son and Spirit who bear record, whose anger burns to hell, whose mercy, although set above the heavens, distils upon this earth,—to Thee, the Triune God, we dedicate this house,—to Thee, we dedicate these sacred walls for the convention of Thy people, and for the public profession of Thy Son's name;—to Thee we dedicate these sacred altars for the administration of Thy holy ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper;—to Thee we dedicate this sacred desk for the dispensation of Thy holy word and prayer;—to Thee we dedicate yonder seats for Thy sacred praise;—to Thee we dedicate ourselves with solemn obligation to be Thine;—to Thee, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, we dedicate our children present, and our children's children to a thousand generations. On this 2d day of January, in the year of our Lord, one thousand, eight hundred and fourteen, we humbly dedicate this house to Thee, the Lord God Almighty, praying that Thy special presence may descend and fill this place, as the Temple of Thy peculiar worship. And now brethren and friends, in this consecrated house, let us all sit down with our long *Amen.*"

At the time of dedication, there was a membership of a hun-

dred and nineteen. During the whole time since the constitution of the church, there have been connected with it 299 members; of these, 239 have been added on the profession of their faith, and 60 by letter. There have been dismissals,—58 by letter, and 38 have died. I would say this record is imperfect; as there are now only 103 members, it leaves 100 members unaccounted for.

Since the dedication, the church edifice has been twice repaired. First in 1839, when the square pews were taken out, and the high pulpit and sounding board were taken down. In 1870, work was commenced, and in 1871 the church was finished as you now see it, at the cost of \$7,500, all of which we rejoice to know is paid, and the church stands dedicated to God, free of debt.

Since the organization of the church, the congregation have received the labors of 23 ministers, an average of not quite two years to a minister, to say nothing of some long intervals when the church was without a supply. Whether the *people* exhausted the ministers, so that they became dry to them, or whether the *ministers* exhausted the people, so that they could no longer live, it does not belong to the historian to determine; but certainly the church has not the glory of any extended pastorate, to which to refer as an evidence of stability and conservative notions. Mr. Harrower served the church from 1807 to 1812. In reading over the list of ministers, kindly furnished by one who remembers them all, one is forcibly reminded of the chapter in I Kings, where Elah, and Zimri, and Omri, and Tibni, one after another, came to the throne of Israel all in the compass of half a dozen verses. My first thought was to give the entire list, but I find it too long, or my time too short.

Rev. A. McMaster was then introduced and gave a powerful historical sermon, reviewing not only the events of the past century, but those events preceding, which had been potent in shaping our history, and through which, under the blessing of God, we had been lifted up and made a free and prosperous people. At the close of Mr. McMaster's sermon, the President announced that these proceedings were about to close, and that if any action remained to be taken, the same would now be in order. Then,

On motion of Dr. Wm. Baxter, of Dutchess county, it was

Resolved, That the thanks of the entire delegations from abroad are due to the Committee of Arrangements and the citizens of Sidney Plains for their *kindness* and *thoughtfulness*, in thus affording to them an opportunity for so pleasant a re-union in commemoration of the first settlement of this valley, and for the complete and ample arrangements made by them for their reception and entertainment whilst here.

On motion of Mr. Abner Johnston, it was

Resolved, That the thanks of the Committee are due, and should be tendered to the Norwich Glee Club for the fine music so kindly furnished by them to enliven the occasion. Also that our thanks be tendered to the representatives of the Press who were present, for their interest in the Centennial and for furnishing *data* and material for a record of the same.

On motion of Hon. Ira E. Sherman, it was

Resolved, That the speakers and Poet of the day be requested to furnish the Committee a copy of their several addresses, that they may be published to the world, and kept as a part of the record of the century just passed.

After the passage of these Resolves, the congregation rose and sang to the tune of "Old Hundred" :

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below,
Praise Hiu above ye Heavenly Host,
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost."

Mr. Rogers then addressing the assembly, briefly acknowledged the courtesies extended to him during his administration of the duties of the Chair, and closed with these words :

"The observances of this day are ended. The first settlement of the Upper Susquehanna Valley, and the events which have followed for *One hundred years*, now belong to history. In obedience to your command, *I declare this Centennial Festival adjourned to the thirteenth day of June, in the year of our Lord one thousand, nine hundred and seventy-two.*"

APPENDIX.

OULEOUT AND CARR'S CREEK.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

BY

SLUMAN L. WATTLES, ESQ.

The generation having personal recollections of the earliest settlement of the valleys of the Ouleout and Carr's Creek, has passed away. All knowledge, therefore, of the brave and enterprising pioneers of these settlements is traditional; and it is surprising that so little of their history is now retained by their descendants. We of the present day having so many privileges, and possessing a cultivated country prepared for us by them, can hardly appreciate the difficulties, dangers and hardships they had to encounter. They were compelled to traverse an unbroken wilderness, inhabited only by wild beasts and savages, from the Hudson river on the east, and the Mohawk on the north, without roads, or any guide except the courses of the streams.

The first explorer of the Ouleout Valley in the town of Sidney, after the Revolutionary War, was SLUMAN WATTLES. In 1784 he came there to examine, survey and lay out in lots, a tract of land extending from a line near the Susquehanna river, southwardly to the Delaware river, afterwards and now called Livingston's Patent. It appears that Mr. Wattles had some interest in this Patent then, and afterwards he was known to be part owner of it. While there at that time he selected a place for himself and built a log cabin on the tract near the spot where Mr. William Taylor's house now stands. In 1785 he moved his family there. He was from Connecticut. He brought his family, consisting of his wife and two or three children, on horseback. Mrs.

Wattles rode the horse, carrying her bed and one child behind her, and one child before her. The other child, a small infant then, was carried most of the way in the arms of a brother of Mr. Wattles, who came with them. This infant child was afterwards the wife of the late Col. Dewey, of Sidney. She was born on the banks of the Delaware river, near the present village of Bloomville; Mr. Wattles, on his way, having stopped there awhile in a deserted cabin, supposed to have been built by some one before the war, and who had been driven off by the Indians. They came down the Delaware, through the place where Delhi now stands, to Platner's Brook; thence up the brook and over the hill to the Ouleout, following an Indian path. They lived there six months before Mrs. Wattles saw the face of a white woman.

The Indians, claiming some title to the lands on which Mr. Wattles had settled, or to the Patent he had surveyed, it became necessary to negotiate with them, and he and they held a council on the banks of the Ouleout, near his house, and made a treaty, the preliminaries of which were, that the Indians should have a barrel of rum, and that they should give up their knives and weapons to Mr. Wattles while they held their pow-wow.

All this region of country was then in Montgomery county. In 1791 Otsego county was formed and consisted of two towns, Cherry Valley and Otsego, and the present town of Sidney was then a part of Otsego. In 1797 Delaware county was formed from Otsego and Ulster. Mr. Wattles was then a Supervisor in Otsego, and took an active part in setting off the new county of Delaware. He was also a magistrate at that time for a large territory, including the present towns of Sidney, Franklin, Masonville and many others. He took an active and leading part in all the local public affairs of that town, and immediately after Delaware county was formed, was appointed one of the county judges.

The Ouleout being the largest stream running through Sidney should have given its beautiful name to the town. Judge Wattles said that the signification of the Indian word *Oulcout* or *Olc-houdt* was "Leafy Water," and that the stream was so named from the abundance of maple leaves that fell into the water in the autumn. Its principal branch, "Handsome Brook," was so named by the judge himself.

About the time that Judge Wattles came into the country, a cousin of his, Nathaniel Wattles, also moved in and settled on the Susquehanna, below the mouth of the Ouleout. His place was long known as "Wattles's Ferry." In 1790 the Legislature of the

State passed an act to construct a road from Catskill to the Ouleout, and appropriated six hundred pounds to make the same. Nathaniel Wattles was one of the contractors to make the road. The road commenced at the Ferry and ran up the Ouleout about a mile and a half; thence directly up and over one of the steepest and highest hills in the town, to the north branch of Carr's Creek, which it crossed about two miles east of Sidney Center. This road was partly cut out and worked, and was used a short time in transporting goods from Catskill, by means of *drays*—a sort of wooden sled drawn by one horse. Mr. Wattles lived at the Ferry several years, and raised a large family, not one of whom went further west. He kept the first tavern in the town, the river there being used as a sort of a highway before any roads were cut out. He was an active and prominent man. He was one of the first two members of Assembly sent to the Legislature after the formation of Delaware county, and he died in Albany while a member. Mr. James Hughston, a relative of Nathaniel Wattles, moved into the town soon after Mr. Wattles did, and settled on the farm now owned by his son, Col. Robert Hughston. It was then a very dense wilderness, and so thick were the trees and bushes that it was said to be impossible to drive a pair of oxen yoked up from Mr. Hughston's house to Wattles's Ferry. Mr. Hughston moved his wife into the country on horseback, with her bed and other articles strapped on the horse; and she used to relate, among other incidents of her early life, how she made a cradle for her first child out of a piece of a hollow tree. Mr. Hughston lived and died in Sidney. He was a magistrate in the town about forty years, several times Supervisor, and once a member of the State Legislature from Delaware county.

Very soon after the close of the Revolutionary War, Adam Rifenbark settled on the bank of the Susquehanna, a short distance below Crookerville. He had previously lived on the other side of the river. It is said he was a deserter from the British army, and came into this country to escape. And about the same time Timothy Beach moved his family into a cabin he had built at the junction of the Ouleout and Susquehanna. The place where he settled was afterwards called and known as the Betts farm. The remains of his cellar are still visible. Mr. Beach lived there a few years, and was drowned in the river; it was supposed, by an Indian. He has numerous descendants residing in Franklin and Walton.

One Abraham Fuller settled on the Ouleout and built a grist mill on the site of the present mills. This mill was built probably in 1788, and was the first grist mill built in Sidney or in any of the adjoining towns. Previous to the building of this mill, the few inhabitants were obliged to go to Schoharie or Harpersfield to mill. One of Judge Wattles's sons used to say that his father had sent him forty miles on horseback to mill, through an almost unbroken wilderness. The first grist mill built on the Susquehanna, in Sidney, was built by a Mr. Bennett, who, it seems, owned it for a considerable time. It was afterwards owned by Mr. Crooker, and he built a woolen factory there.

One Carr built the only grist mill ever built on Carr's Creek. It was built at an early date. It was a small affair, and it is said that Carr brought his mill irons on his back all the way from Cooperstown; a distance of nearly or quite forty miles.

In the year 1789 Isaac Hodges came from the town of Florida, on the Mohawk river, in the county of Montgomery, to the Ouleout, to look for lands for his sons to settle on. He selected and purchased a tract of about 500 acres, being a part of the Patent that had been surveyed by Judge Wattles, a few years previous. His purchase extended from the line of lands now (1872) owned by Thomas Williams, down the stream to a line about a mile from the Susquehanna river, and included extensive flats on both sides of the Ouleout. He paid ten shillings (\$1.25) an acre, and he divided this land among his four sons, Hezekiah, Benjamin, Isaac and Josiah. Early in the spring of 1790 Hezekiah with his wife and his brothers, Benjamin and Josiah, moved on and took possession of the land. They came by the way of the Schoharie to the head of the Delaware river, and thence crossed over to the Ouleout, and followed that stream down to their place. They moved with a yoke of oxen and one horse, and carried their few household goods and provender or fodder for their team, on a sort of a sled, with very crooked runners, which in those days was called a *dray*, and which was so constructed as to be easily passed over logs and other obstructions. This sort of vehicle was much used then, being cheaply made, and, it is said, that barrels of rum were brought on them all the way from Catskill to the Susquehanna.

They arrived at their destination on the 29th day of April, 1790, with about 200 lbs. of hay for their teams and a little corn. On the day after their arrival the snow fell two feet deep, and

they suffered much for the want of provisions, and also for fodder for their teams.

After reaching their lands their first stopping place was on the lowest flat on the Ouleout, and on the farm now owned by William T. Hodges, a grandson of Hezekiah. There they camped out, and immediately proceeded to build a cabin in this way: They cut logs and rolled them up for two sides, leaving the other side open, and in front of the open side they piled a large log heap and set it on fire, and covering it with bark and brush they managed to keep dry and warm. In this cabin, on the 20th of June, 1790, Elizabeth, oldest child of Hezekiah, was born. She is still living. As soon as the sons had made a little improvement and built a house, their father came to and lived with them until he died. He was buried on his own land. Two of the sons soon went further west. Benjamin died, and Hezekiah and Maria, his wife, both lived in Sidney to good old age, and left numerous descendants; many of whom still reside in this town. Hezekiah brought apple seeds with him, and immediately planted a nursery near his first cabin, and that nursery is the father of many of the oldest orchards in that neighborhood.

In 1797 Stephen Dewey, with his sons, William, Roger and Daniel, settled on the farm now owned by his grandson, Ralph Dewey. Soon after, his son William, afterwards well known as Col. Dewey, purchased the farm and resided on it until his death. Col. Dewey filled many public positions. He was Supervisor of the town of Sidney and a member of the Legislature. Among other early settlers on the Ouleout are remembered the names of Jonathan Bush, at whose house the first town-meeting was held, and one Stevens, who had the grist-mill on the Ouleout and ran the first and only distillery for making whisky in the town. Oliver Gager, a captain in the militia, Nathaniel Wolcott, Josiah Thatcher, for many years town clerk, William Evans and others.

The first settler at Sidney Center, to remain there, was Jacob Bidwell. He moved there with his family in 1793, and built a cabin on the farm now owned by William Dewey. He moved his family on a sled. He went over the hill from the Ouleout to Carr's Creek, probably on the old State road, which was then just cut out and opened. The old State road commenced at Wattles's Ferry and ran up the Ouleout a short distance; thence directly over one of the steepest and highest hills in the town to the north branch of Carr's Creek; thence easterly, towards Catskill. It was never completed. In passing over the logs in the

road, Mr. Bidwell's sled broke, and it being dark he put Mrs. Bidwell and the children on the horses and went through. He went back for his goods the next day. Mr. Bidwell found two or three families about there, but their names are now unknown. The next winter, being a very hard one, these families all moved away, which left them alone, and Mrs. Bidwell did not see the face of a white woman for three months. They encountered great privations and hardships, provisions being scarce, and the timber was so heavy that it took a long time to clear the land and raise a crop.

A short time after, Mr. John Wellman came and settled on the farm now owned by Samuel Niles, and soon after, two families of Bradshaws came, one of which settled about where the school-house now stands, and about this time Charles Thompson moved in. Capt. Samuel Smith also settled on Carr's Creek about this time. He built farther up the creek, and his place went by the name of "Smith Settlement" for many years. Capt. Smith, in moving, had to cut his own road from Franklin up the hill, about where the Sherman Hill road now runs.

Nearly all of these old settlers raised large families, and have numerous descendants, some of whom still remain in Sidney, but most of them are widely scattered. Mr. Jacob Bidwell was a man of energy and industry, noted for his zeal and activity in religious matters. He was the father of the Baptist churches in Sidney, and conducted the first religious meeting on Carr's Creek. The occasion of the meeting was the death of the wife of Charles Thompson, one of the early settlers, who was killed by lightning under distressing circumstances. The few inhabitants at that time held a meeting at Mr. Wellman's house, and Mr. Bidwell there made the first public prayer ever offered by a white man on Carr's Creek; a revival ensued, a society was formed, and this was the foundation of the Baptist church in that part of the town, also of the church that was afterwards constituted on the Ouleout. Mr. and Mrs. Bidwell are both buried near their first home. The marble marks the spot where they lie, but a living and nobler monument to the memory of the wife stands on the land they first cleared. It is a large pine tree, now about eighty years old, which was saved from the fire by her when the ground was burned over for its first crop. It was then a small bush, and she saved it by throwing her apron over it and protecting it from the heat. Mr. Wellman was a captain in the Revolutionary War, a great hunter, and many stories are told of his prowess and

deeds in killing the bears, panthers and wolves, of which the country was full at that time. The first school on Carr's Creek was taught by Charles Bidwell, a brother of Jacob, and the only person now living who attended that school is Mr. Simeon Bidwell, now of Unadilla, who was born at Sidney Center in 1798.

Jonathan Carley came from Dutches county in 1795, and settled on the banks of the Susquehanna, in this town, about two miles below Otego village. He found one Collyer and Nathan Hill there; Josiah Chase also came before that time, but at what date is not known. Some of Mr. Chase's family still remain on the farm. Laban Crandall, John French and Jerry Reed came immediately after; also one Godfrey Calder. The first school kept in that part of the town of Sidney, was taught by Miss Abigail Reed, in Mr. Calder's barn.

THE subject of the following sketch (Rev. Mr. Johnston) is the second son of Col. Witter Johnston, whose name is so often and honorably mentioned in the proceedings of the Centennial. Mr. J. is well remembered by the older residents of Sidney Plains as an amiable young man, remarkable for his diligence in the pursuit of knowledge, his freedom from the frivolities and excesses of youth, and perhaps, more than all, for his strictly conscientious deportment and exemplary religious character, which dates back almost to his earliest childhood :

REV. JAMES HARVEY JOHNSTON.

By Rev. J. F. Tuttle, D. D.

1824.

DECEMBER 9TH.

1872.

I have just been calling on the venerable patriarch of our Church in Indiana, the Rev. James H. Johnston. There was no special reason for the call beyond the pleasure it brought the visitor himself. The dates under his honored name indicate a period of forty-eight years. On the 9th of December, 1824, Mr. Johnston reached Madison, Indiana, a date which he affectionately retains as the beginning of his miuistry and sojourn in this

State. To-day I find him as cheerful and even hilarious as he ought to have been when so many years ago he dismounted in that pretty town on the Ohio for the first time. If any one has thought to exercise a sort of pity for him to-day, by reason of the wide difference between the two dates above-named, I beg him to dismiss it. It is true the good man is forty-eight years older than when he came to Indiana, but among the nearly two millions in this State, I am sure there is not a more cheerful man than he is. He relishes good things, loves a good joke or story, and tells as good a one as anybody can. I have not heard a merrier laugh in many a day than his to-day, as he told of the inquiries made by himself and his traveling companion for a suitable place to stop at in Rising Sun, when on his first journey westward. They were told of a Major Jelly as keeping a sort of "minister's tavern," and asked their informant if the Major was a pious man, and the man replied, "He's only middling!"

And after his hearty laugh Mr. Johnston added, "We found the Major was not a church member, but his wife was, and they gave us a cordial welcome."

I was saying our patriarch does not need much pity, for in all our churches I am sure there is not a Christian man who so steadily makes his way to all the services of the sanctuary on the Sabbath and during the other days of the week. It must be a very heavy storm to keep him home when God's people meet to pray, and as for mere darkness it has no terror for him. And he is not a silent member of "the meeting," but takes his part in the prayers and exhortations, and no voice is heard with greater pleasure than his. His expositions of Paul's writings are charming, and taking him altogether, he seems about as happy a man as we have among us.

He is the grandson of a north of Ireland man that settled near Schenectady, and just one hundred years ago removed to Sidney Plains on the Susquehanna, in New York. His father, then a young man, spent the first winter at that parish among the Indians, there being no white man with him. The grandfather and father ended their days there.* Mr Johnston's mother was desirous that he should be educated to preach the Gospel. And under that impulse he began to study and read. To get the means of an education he taught school in Unadilla, and in 1816 rode sixty miles to be present at Hamilton College Commencement, in order to be examined for admission to Freshmen. He

* As to the grandfather, this is an error. *Ante* p. 35.

remained there four years, and in 1820 pronounced the class valedictory as first honor man. The second honor man, the Saluatorian, a Mr. Humphrey, a lawyer, still resides in Rochester. His Senior year was made memorable by the addition of Albert Barnes to the class. After Mr. Barnes's conversion that year, he and Mr. Johnston became greatly attached to each other, an attachment that received its first interruption from the death of Mr. Barnes. The two friends corresponded with each other for over forty years, and one of the most charming of all the papers called out by Mr. Barnes's death was one from the pen of his life-long friend Johnston, and delivered in Center church, Crawfordsville, and several other places. The richest part of this discourse consists in the extracts from Mr. Barnes's own letters to Mr. Johnston. It is to be regretted that this delightful discourse has not been printed.

Mr. Johnston is not an old man yet, having been born Oct. 14, 1798, so that he has just fairly entered his seventy-fifth year. He was graduated at the age of twenty-two, taught school in Utica a year, and then studied theology at Princeton, where, I think, he was also in the same class with Mr. Barnes for a part of the course. In the fall of 1824 he came on horseback to Indiana, passing through Buffalo, Cleveland, Dayton, and (leaving Cincinnati to the south), Lawrenceburg, Aurora, and Rising Sun to Madison.

He was then a licentiate. In the entire State there was only one Presbytery—Salem—belonging to the Synod of Kentucky. He was ordained in 1825, in the fall, attended the Synod of Kentucky at Louisville, and in 1826 went to General Assembly at Philadelphia, carrying a petition to divide Salem Presbytery into three, and organize the Synod of Indiana. This request was granted, and the new Synod erected, including all Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, and "the regions beyond." The first meeting was held at Vincennes, as was also the third, in 1828, which was remarkable for a special revival in connection with the sessions of Synod. "Large additions were made to the church at that time."

Mr. Johnston was settled at Madison, where he remained for many years, and then removed to Crawfordsville, where he has been pastor of Center church, and the Principal of a Seminary for young ladies, in both of which positions he had great success. He is now *emeritus* senior pastor of Center church, and so greatly is he beloved that for years he performed a large part of the marriages in this vicinity, and Senator Lane once, with a

happy turn, said, "We ought to ask the Legislature to pass a law that no marriage in Crawfordsville shall be binding unless solemnized by Father Johnston!"

He has lived to witness vast changes since he came to Indiana, and may he live many years more among those who so greatly love and honor him.

LETTER FROM REV. JAMES H. JOHNSTON.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, July 2d, 1872.

John Baxter, Esq., and others, Members of the Committee:

When I replied to your communication, inviting me to attend the Centennial you had in contemplation, I intended to write to you again before its celebration would occur, but failed to do so. I would have felt great interest in being present on such an occasion, and regret that, under the circumstances, I felt constrained to deny myself the gratification.

But little over twenty-six years of the century, now called to mind, had passed away when I became a resident of Sidney Plains, and it continued the place of my residence for twenty-six years following. At the close of this period, having completed my literary and theological education, I came to Indiana, which I had previously chosen as my adopted State.

During the forty-eight years that have since elapsed I have never seen cause to regret the choice I then made. The opportunity has been allowed me, during this period, of revisiting, at eight different times, the scenes of my childhood. Had I been there at the Centennial celebration it would have been a very fitting close to these interesting visits. But I must now be satisfied to know that others were allowed the gratification that was denied to me.

References made in the brief account of the celebration which has been published, call to my mind facts and persons that are well recollected. Old man Bacon, especially, whose name is mentioned, I often saw, and many times sat and listened to his long stories, with which he was always ready to entertain the young when they would give him a hearing.

But I cherish the recollection of Sidney Plains, and the scenes and incidents connected with it, not solely or principally as the place of my birth and residence, but more especially for the deeply interesting religious associations connected with it. It was there I received, through the fidelity of pious parents and Christian teachers, my first and most enduring impressions of the importance of eternal things, and was led to devote myself, at an early age, to the service of God. I recollect the meetings of thrilling interest it was my privilege to attend, and the large numbers, who, at different times, came forward to make a public profession of their faith in Christ. In those days, long since gone by, the Gospel was attended with power, in that church, and seasons of much spiritual prosperity were often enjoyed. I hope the church may continue to be blessed, and these visitations of divine grace be granted with still greater power in time to come.

Affectionately yours,

JAMES H. JOHNSTON.

DEACON NICHOLAS SLUYTER.

(Died March 13, 1874, aged 88 Years.)

The following extracts are from the pen of Rev. S. W. Weiss, of Guilford, Chenango county, his friend and pastor:

"Mr. Sluyter opened his eyes for the first time to the lights and shadows of this world, at Sidney Plains, July 21, 1875. His mother was a daughter of Rev. Mr. Johnston, a Presbyterian divine, who was the first settler in that village. In 1778, just seven years previous to his birth, the famous Indian chief, Joseph Brant, made a raid upon the valley from Aquago, drove off the inhabitants and made his headquarters for a time at what he called 'Tunadilla.' His mother fled with the inhabitants to Cherry Valley for safety.

At the time of his birth, there was not a single inhabitant within the present limits of the town of Guilford. The whole country was an unbroken wilderness in which wild beasts and savage Indians roamed at large. What wonderful changes have come over the face of nature, within the circle of his vision, since that day, and what changes have occurred among the different

nations of the earth ! Then Washington, Napoleon, and George III. were alive and famous.

In those days boys were accustomed to toils and hardships, which imparted to them great strength and good health ; and this may account in a great measure for the good constitution and long life of the departed octogenarian.

Mr. Sluyter and his bereaved companion were united in marriage in 1819, almost fifty-five years ago ; but as the closest unions must be broken up, and the strongest ties be severed, so they are separated at last by death—but not long, for she will soon follow him. She may truly say in the words of another—

“ My latest sun is sinking fast,
My race is nearly run;
My strongest trials now are past,
My triumph is begun.”

Mr. Sluyter embraced the religion of Christ in his nineteenth year, or nearly seventy years ago, and united with the Presbyterian church, at Sidney Plains. He was a true and faithful member of that church until about twenty-five years since, when he changed his relation, and became a member of the M. E. Church at Rockdale. He remained in this church until death released him. He was a faithful Christian at all times and in all places. For a few years past he has not been able to take as active a part in public worship as formerly, increasing infirmities rendering it necessary for him to tarry at home except in most pleasant weather. But he found God at home, and served him most faithfully. Several weeks since, learning that he was quite feeble, I called upon him, and in conversation found he was trusting fully in the grace and mercy of God, and he maintained this trust to the last moment.

Thus the aged man of God lived and died. For the last thirteen years he has resided with his son, William, where he found a pleasant home and kind treatment. His wants were all supplied, and during his last illness he received all the attention that a faithful son could bestow upon his parent. God will bless and honor the love and care of such children.”

